THE STORY OF A POET: MADISON CAWEIN

OTTO A. ROTHERT

THE STORY OF A POET MADISON CAWEIN

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WITHDRAWN

To
Mr. and Mrs. Otto L. Schmidt,
a salutation from
Otto A. Rothert.

Louisville,
Kentucky,
December 15, 1924

FILSON CLUB PUBLICATIONS: No. 30

The Story of a Poet: Madison Cawein

His Intimate Life as Revealed by His Letters and Other Hitherto Unpublished Material, Including Reminiscences by His Closest Associates; also Articles from Newspapers and Magazines, and a List of His Poems

BY

OTTO A. ROTHERT

Secretary of the Filson Club

Author of Local History in Kentucky Literature, A History of Muhlenberg County, A History of Unity Baptist Church, etc.

WITH MORE THAN SIXTY ILLUSTRATIONS

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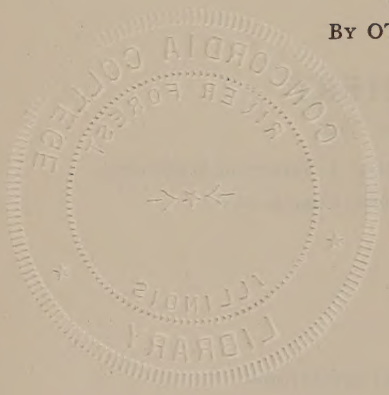

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DEDICATED TO
MADISON CAWEIN II

There are fairies; verily;
Verily;
For the old owl in the tree,
Hollow tree,
He who maketh melody
For them tripping merrily,
Told it me.
There are fairies; verily,
There are fairies.

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to tell the life-story of Madison Cawein, the poet. The material is presented as a complete biography and in the form of a source book. The greater portion of the story is history as printed by his contemporary press and as revealed through his letters and the reminiscences and the recollections of his friends.

Cawein preserved very little material touching upon the history of his life or of his works. That such data might some day be sought evidently never occurred to him. The little he saved bearing on his life was saved by mere chance, and most of it was either destroyed or widely scattered before this attempt to compile a biography was contemplated. Cawein died December 8, 1914, and shortly thereafter his widow expressed her intention to write a book on his career. She was in poor health the greater part of the time after his death and therefore made no preparations to carry out her plan. Shortly after her death, which occurred in April, 1918, I made an investigation, expecting to find considerable Cawein material and to deposit it in the archives of the Filson Club for the benefit of persons who desired to do research work on that subject. All that then remained in the Cawein home was unhesitatingly placed at my disposal The bulk of it, not including the remnants of the poet's library, consisted of his high school diploma, an early scrap-book and about five hundred newspaper (not magazine) clippings pertaining to some of his books, about two hundred recent letters and a few poems in his own hand. If I am not mistaken, the quantity was even less than when I glanced over it one day during the last year of the poet's life—the year I knew him.

The small collection of sundries turned over to me was too incomplete to serve any definite purpose. It was evident that the gathering of material could be done under less disadvantage if begun at once. Believing that some day the world would be greatly interested in the life-story of the poet I assumed the work of collecting material for and compiling a volume, regardless of the time and expense required. My plans were announced through the press; Louisville friends and other Kentuckians were interviewed; pil-

grimages were made to most of his haunts; letters were sent and received, and about four hundred that had been written by Cawein were submitted; research work was done in various private and public libraries; visits were made in the East to some of his friends, including William Dean Howells, Clinton Scollard, Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Henry Van Dyke and Harrison S. Morris. This book—a memorial to my friend—is the result of the undertaking. It is in every sense a labor of love; a task which has been more than compensated by the pleasure it has given.

An attempt is made to show the esteem in which Cawein's works were held by his contemporaries. Like Poe and Keats and many other true poets, Cawein did not receive a general recognition while he was still writing. He now awaits the wide and deserved recognition which time alone bestows. That the number of appreciators of Cawein's works never decreased but slowly increased during his life-time points toward an enduring fame. Two years before he died, *The Poetry Review* of London in its issue for October, 1912—a number devoted to Modern American Poetry—said, "He appears quite the biggest figure among American poets; his *return to nature* has no tinge of affectation; it is genuine to the smallest detail."

Cawein's greatest hope was that his poetry would live. By publishing his poems in book form, after they had appeared in newspapers and magazines, he did much toward preserving it. During the course of his career he issued thirty-six volumes. He published a greater number of books of poems than did any other American poet. Some of the critics expressed the opinion that he wrote too much. The same critics declared, sooner or later, that notwithstanding the unusual quantity of his poetry most of it was of unusual quality. Six of his books consist chiefly of selections he made from previous volumes. It is generally admitted that a poet seldom knows his best work. To what extent this is true of Cawein must yet be determined. Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse, of New York, is now engaged in making a Selection, which will be a step toward this end.

Miss Rittenhouse has long been familiar with Cawein's poetry and has many times written of it with sympathetic insight and appreciation. The article upon Cawein in her book, *The Younger American Poets*, published in 1904, indicates that she entered into and divined many of the moods of his genius. That she, herself, is a poet is evident throughout her volume of poems, *The Door of Dreams*. In her well-known compilations of American poetry—*The Little Book of American Verse*, *The Little Book of Modern Verse*, and *The Second Book of Modern Verse*—she has raised the difficult task of anthology-making to a fine art and has shown that she is a poet worthy to select another's best work. It is peculiarly fitting and singularly fortunate that Miss Rittenhouse should undertake the making of a Selection which will take the form of a definitive edition.

Madison Cawein

In the preparation of this volume on the life and the works of Cawein all material that was submitted to me or found after personal research was carefully considered. Every item which, in my opinion, bore on the poet's career was used. Should the reader possess any other letters, documents or data, or prepare for print his recollections of Cawein, the Filson Club will receive such material for deposit in its archives where it will be available to students, and from which collection parts or all may be selected for another publication.

I am indebted to the many men and women who supplied me with material used in this book, especially to the correspondents of Cawein who submitted their Cawein letters. I am also greatly indebted to the staff of the Louisville Free Public Library and to the friends of Cawein who, at my suggestion, wrote their reminiscences of him. Above all, however, I am indebted to Miss Anna Blanche McGill and Young E. Allison who aided me in many ways.

Louisville, Kentucky
March 23, 1921.

I

A PICTUROGRAPHY OF MADISON CAWEIN

Madison Cawein as seen through sixty-three half-tone reproductions of photographs, paintings and documents bearing on his life and works, which, with their explanatory texts, present a brief biography of the poet.

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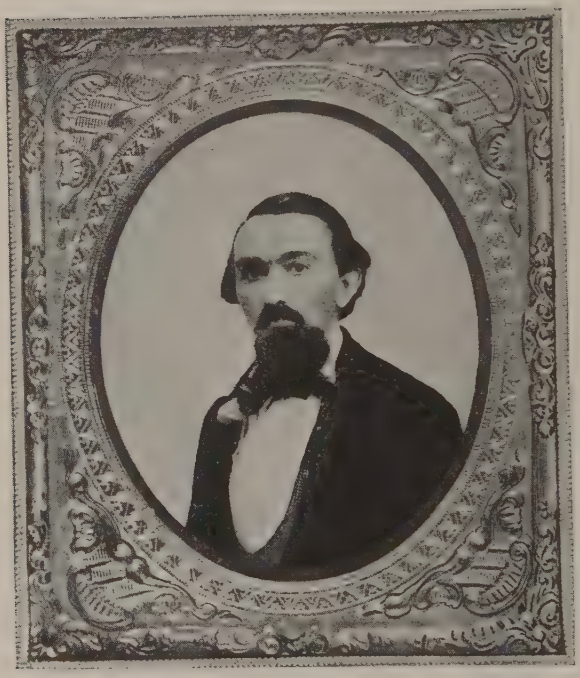
From an oil painting by J. Bernhard Alberts, 1914

Madison Cawein was born March 23, 1865, in Louisville, where he lived nearly all of his life, and where he died December 8, 1914.

Madison Cawein



From a daguerreotype, about 1865

Dr. William Cawein was thirty-eight years old when his son Madison, the poet, was born. Dr. Cawein was a practical Herbalist.

From a daguerreotype, about 1865

Mrs. William Cawein was twenty-six years old when her son Madison, the poet, was born. She was interested in Spiritualism.

From a sketch

The Herancour coat of arms. Dr. William Cawein was a descendant of Jean de Herancour who left France in 1685 for Mühlhofen, near the Rhine, Germany. There the poet's father was born in 1827.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Madison Cawein was born in Louisville in a house that stood opposite the Court House, and near Fifth Street. On its site now stands a brick building three stories high with a width of four windows.

From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, 1894

When Cawein was nine years of age his parents moved to Rock Springs, a resort east of Louisville, near Brownsboro, on a hill overlooking the South Fork of Harrod's Creek. Many years later the poet said, "There for the first time I came in contact with wild nature."

From a photograph by Otto A. Rothert, 1920

The Rock Springs Hotel was managed by Cawein's father in 1874 and 1875. Nothing remains of this once well-known resort except an old stone milk house from which there flows, now as then, a clear water spring. The poet often returned to the Rock Springs country.

From a photograph by Otto A. Rothert, 1920

Cawein was in his eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth years when his parents lived in a cottage on the Knobs, near New Albany, Indiana. "Here I formed my great love for nature," said the poet in his comments on his youth. In 1879 the Caweins returned to Louisville.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

The Cawein cottage on the Knobs was in the center of a panorama of beautiful landscapes. On the Kentucky side, in the dim distance, can be seen Iroquois Park and Kenwood Hill. In later years the poet spent much time on these two hills near Louisville.

From a photograph, about 1881

Madison Cawein and his three brothers. Madison, the youngest, then aged about sixteen, is standing with his right hand on William's shoulder; John is holding a hat, and back of him is Charles.

From a photograph, about 1884

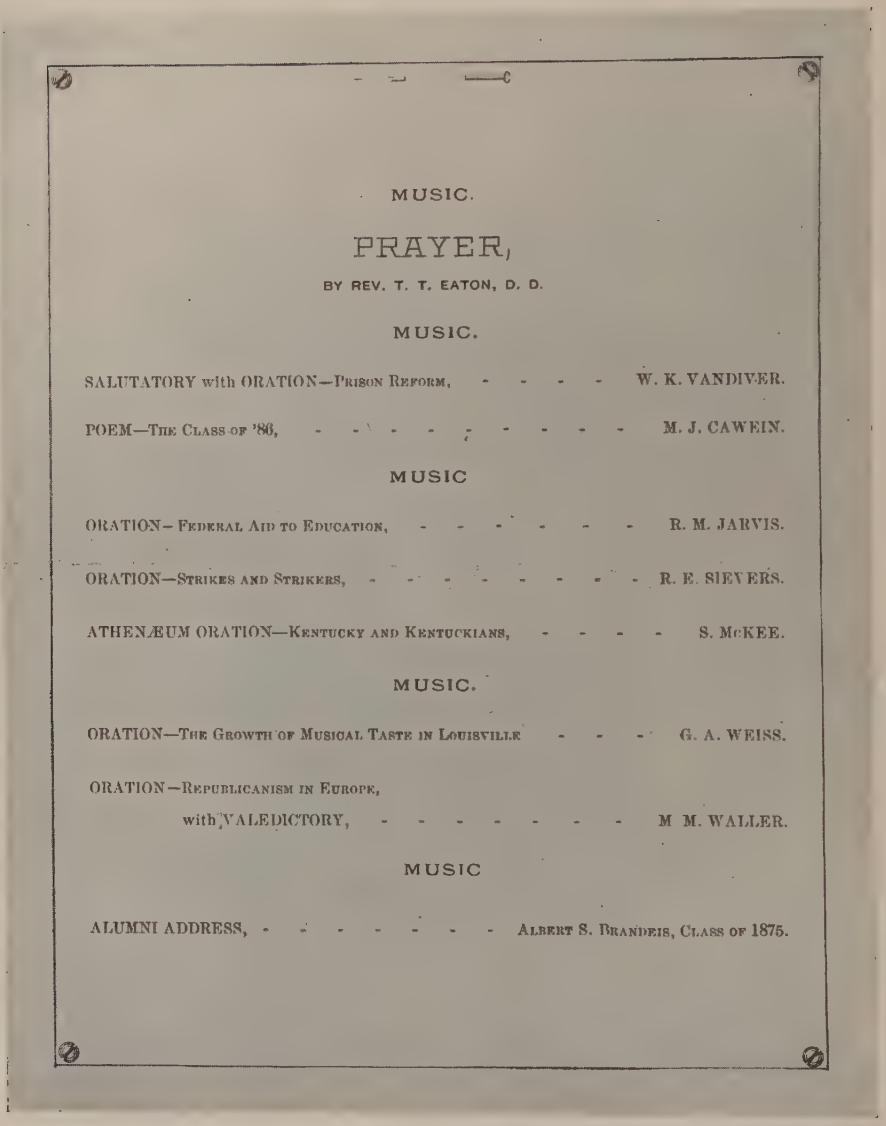
Madison Cawein, and his brother Charles, and cousin Fred W. Cawein. Madison is standing in the center; Charles is at his right and Fred is sitting at his left. Fred was one of the poet's closest friends.

From a photograph by Doerr, 1885

Cawein as he appeared during his last year as a high school boy.

From a photograph by Doerr, 1887

Cawein was twenty-two years old when he published his first book.



MUSIC.

PRAYER,

BY REV. T. T. EATON, D. D.

MUSIC.

SALUTATORY with ORATION—PRISON REFORM, - - - - - W. K. VANDIVER.

POEM—THE CLASS OF '86, - - - - - - - - - - M. J. CAWEIN.

MUSIC

ORATION—FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION, - - - - - - - R. M. JARVIS.

ORATION—STRIKES AND STRIKERS, - - - - - - - - - R. E. SIEVERS.

ATHENÆUM ORATION—KENTUCKY AND KENTUCKIANS, - - - - - S. McKEE.

MUSIC.

ORATION—THE GROWTH OF MUSICAL TASTE IN LOUISVILLE - - - - G. A. WEISS.

ORATION—REPUBLICANISM IN EUROPE,
with VALEDICTORY, - - - - - - - - - M. M. WALLER.

MUSIC

ALUMNI ADDRESS, - - - - - - - - ALBERT S. BRANDEIS, CLASS OF 1875.

Facsimile of second page of Commencement Program

Madison Cawein graduated from the Louisville Male High School on June 11, 1886. As shown on the Program, he was the Class Poet.

MUSIC.

Presentation of Prizes.

Alumni Prize.

Faculty Prize.

English Literature Prize.

Shakspere Prize.

Conferring of Degrees,

BY F. C. LEBER, M. D,

President of the Louisville School Board.

BENEDICTION.

MUSIC.

CANDIDATES FOR DEGREES

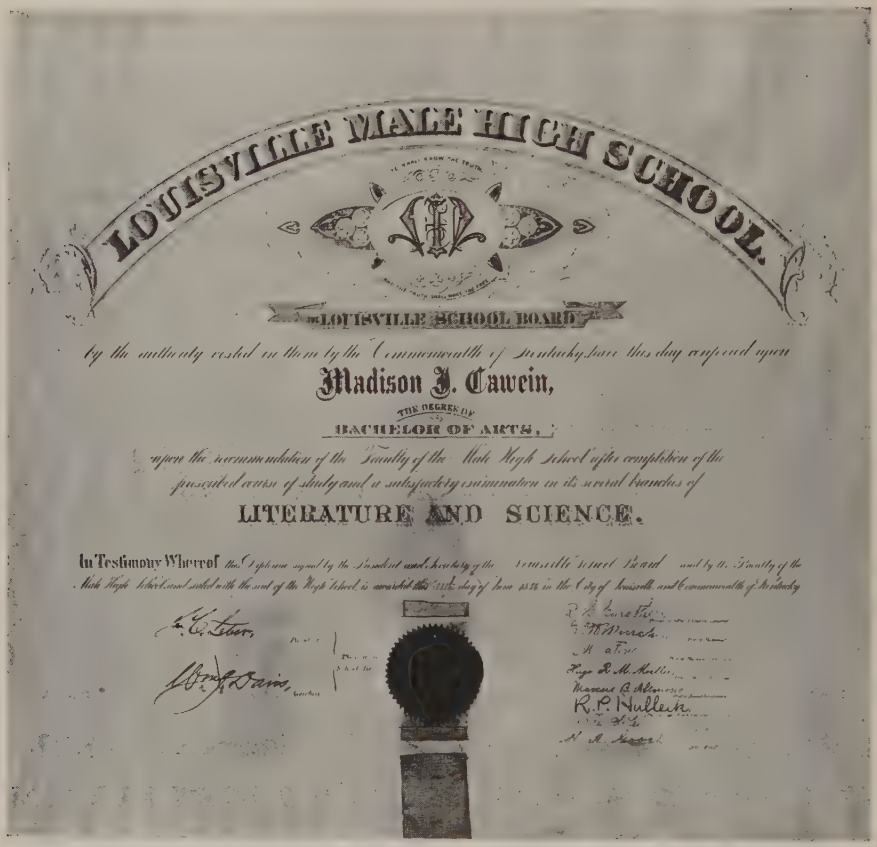
MADISON J. CAWEIN.
J. MILES GLEASON.
JAMES B. HEBDEN.
ALFRED HERR HITE.
HERMAN HOEPPNER.
ROBERT MURRELL JARVIS.
E. McKEE LATIMER.
SAMUEL McKEE, JR.
CHURCHILL TALBOT SCEARCE.
ROBERT ELWOOD SIEVERS.
MATHEW MASON WALLER.
GEORGE A. WEISS.
WILLIAM KNOX VANDIVER.

CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY.

GEORGE JOHN DREWRY.

Facsimile of third page of Commencement Program

The Class of '86 consisted of thirteen boys of whom Madison Cawein was the oldest. All received the degree of Bachelor of Arts.



LOUISVILLE MALE HIGH SCHOOL.

LOUISVILLE SCHOOL BOARD

by the authority vested in them by the Commonwealth of Kentucky have this day conferred upon

Madison J. Cawein,

THE DEGREE OF

BACHELOR OF ARTS,

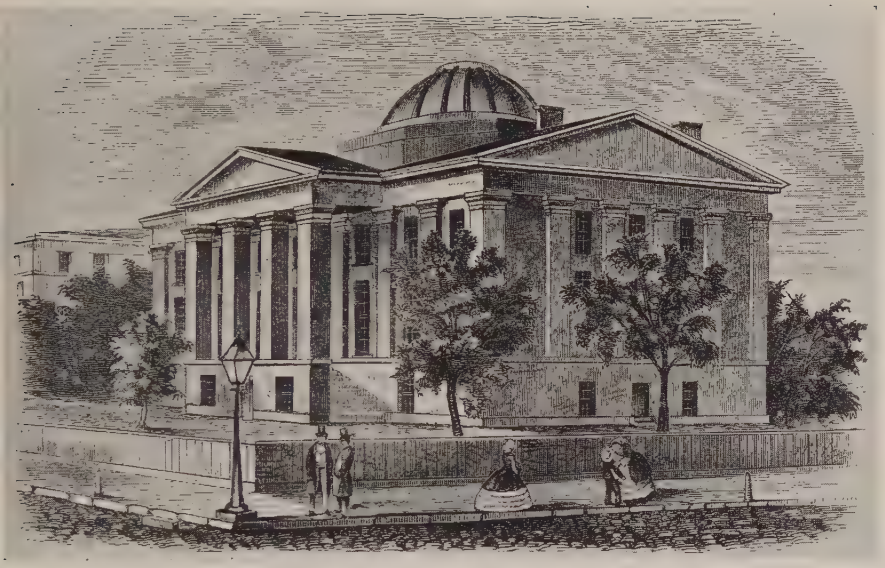
upon the recommendation of the Faculty of the Male High School after completion of the prescribed course of study and a satisfactory examination in its several branches of

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

In Testimony Whereof this Diploma signed by the President and Secretary of the Louisville School Board and by the Faculty of the Male High School and sealed with the seal of the High School is awarded this 11th day of June 1872 in the City of Louisville and Commonwealth of Kentucky

Greatly reduced facsimile of Diploma

Madison Cawein's diploma was signed by Dr. F. C. Leber, President, and Wm. J. Davis, Secretary, of the Louisville School Board; and by R. H. Carothers, Principal and Prof. of English Language; E. M. Murch, Prof. of Mathematics; H. W. Eaton, Prof. of Physics and Chemistry; Hugo R. M. Moeller, Prof. of Modern Languages; Marcus B. Allmond, Prof. of Ancient Languages; R. P. Halleck, Prof. of Logic, Psychology and Rhetoric; W. T. St. Clair, Adj. Prof.; and H. A. Gooch, Adj. Prof., the members of the faculty.



From a wood cut, about 1860

In 1886 the Louisville Male High Shool Building, Ninth and Chestnut streets, appeared very much as it had many years before Madison Cawein's school days. When Cawein attended this school it represented the academic department of the University of Louisville.

From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, about 1890

Cawein lived on the south side of High Avenue, near Thirteenth Street, from 1882 to March 1886. The house was torn down many years ago. A little more than the front is shown on the extreme right.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Cawein made his home with his parents at the south-east corner of Nineteenth and Market streets from 1886 until June, 1903, when he was married. He wrote nineteen of his books while living in this house.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

In 1887, and for about six years thereafter, Cawein was a cashier in the Newmarket pool room, on Third Street, where betting on horse races was the business transacted. The building is now occupied by the Caxton Printing Company, indicated by the swinging sign.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Cawein's first book, *Blooms of the Berry*, was printed in October, 1887, by John P. Morton & Company, Main Street, which published eleven of his thirty-six volumes, and, among other books, twenty-nine of the Filson Club Publications—including this volume, Number 30.

From a water color by Fred W. Cawein, 1896

During his high school years, and for many years thereafter, Cawein often returned to the Brownsboro country where he was the guest of the Babbits, whose old farm and home are near Rock Springs.

From a water color by Wm. C. Cawein, 1893

In 1914, Cawein wrote: "The old water mill [Babbit's Mill] in the Valley of Rock Springs has played an important part in my poems of this locality, which I have celebrated in verse now for thirty years."

From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, 1894

Sometimes Cawein wandered alone through the beech groves, over the fields, and along the streams in the Brownsboro country, and sometimes he was accompanied by the Babbits and other friends.

From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, 1894

This picturesque old home near Brownsboro, and many other old homes and human haunts elsewhere, appealed to Cawein no less than did the forests and fields and the hills and the hollows.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Cawein made many pilgrimages to the Indiana Knobs, near New Albany, where he had spent three years of his boyhood on a farm.

From a photograph, about 1893

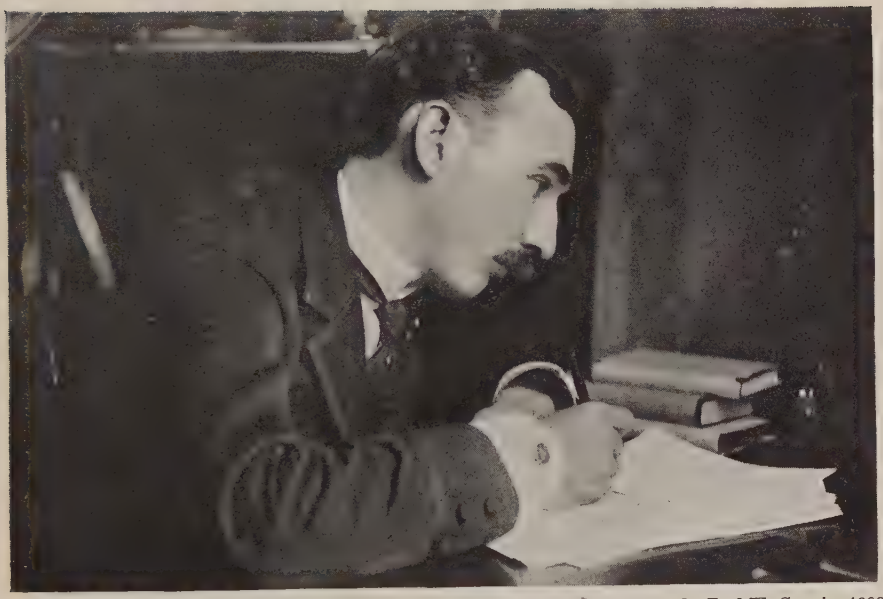
Madison J. Cawein

At times Cawein left Kentucky for his health or to promote his art; but no place appealed to him as did the country around Louisville.

2302

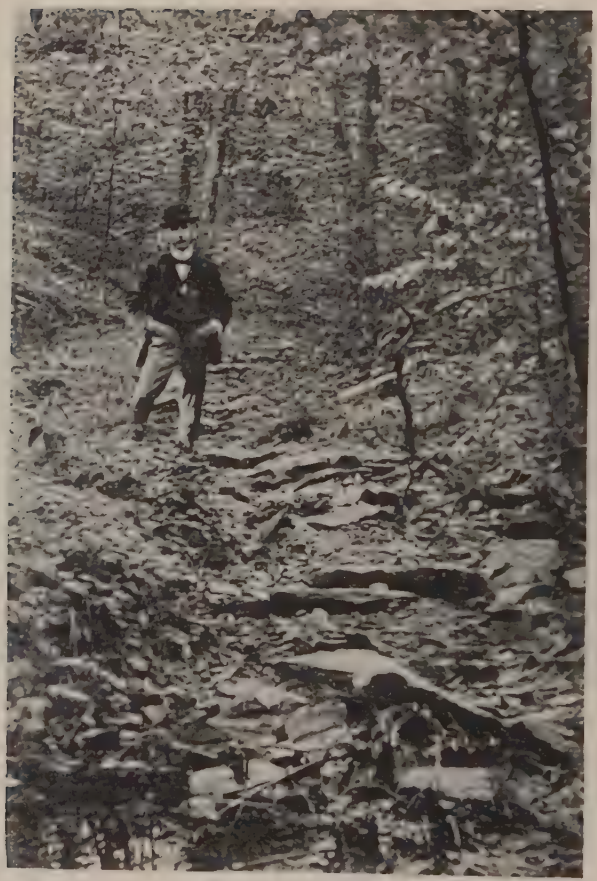
From a water color by Fred W. Cawein, 1893

From 1891 to 1903 the poet's father owned a small farm near Jeffersontown and about twelve miles from Louisville. Its principal features were an orchard, a vineyard and a garden. The poet often visited the place, although the Caweins never used it as a home. The largest building was an old barn, "low, swallow-swept and gray."



From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, 1900

The poet in his study. Cawein lived at Nineteenth and Market streets during the first seventeen years of his literary career. Shortly after publishing his first poems he was encouraged by the Louisville press. His works attracted the attention of eminent critics in the East and in England, and he soon gained an international reputation.



From a photograph by Fred W. Cawein, 1902

Madison Cawein spent much of his time in the heart of nature.

From a photograph by James S. Escott, 1912

The Old Frog Pond near Kenwood Hill was one of Cawein's haunts.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

What is now known as the Cawein Walk was, in Cawein's time, and still is, a very secluded path in Iroquois Park. Its old stone steps were one of the poet's favorite "solitary places" for writing.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Lying just beyond the southern end of the Cawein Walk is The Bowl, one of many beautiful scenes in Iroquois Park. This large, natural park—also known as Jacob Park—was an Elysium for Cawein.

From an oil painting by Paul A. Plaschke, 1919

"The Enchanted Tree," was painted in memory of Cawein who frequently lingered under this old sycamore on Silver Creek, near New Albany and the Silver Hills. For him it was another haunt of Pan.

From an oil painting by J. Bernhard Alberts, 1918

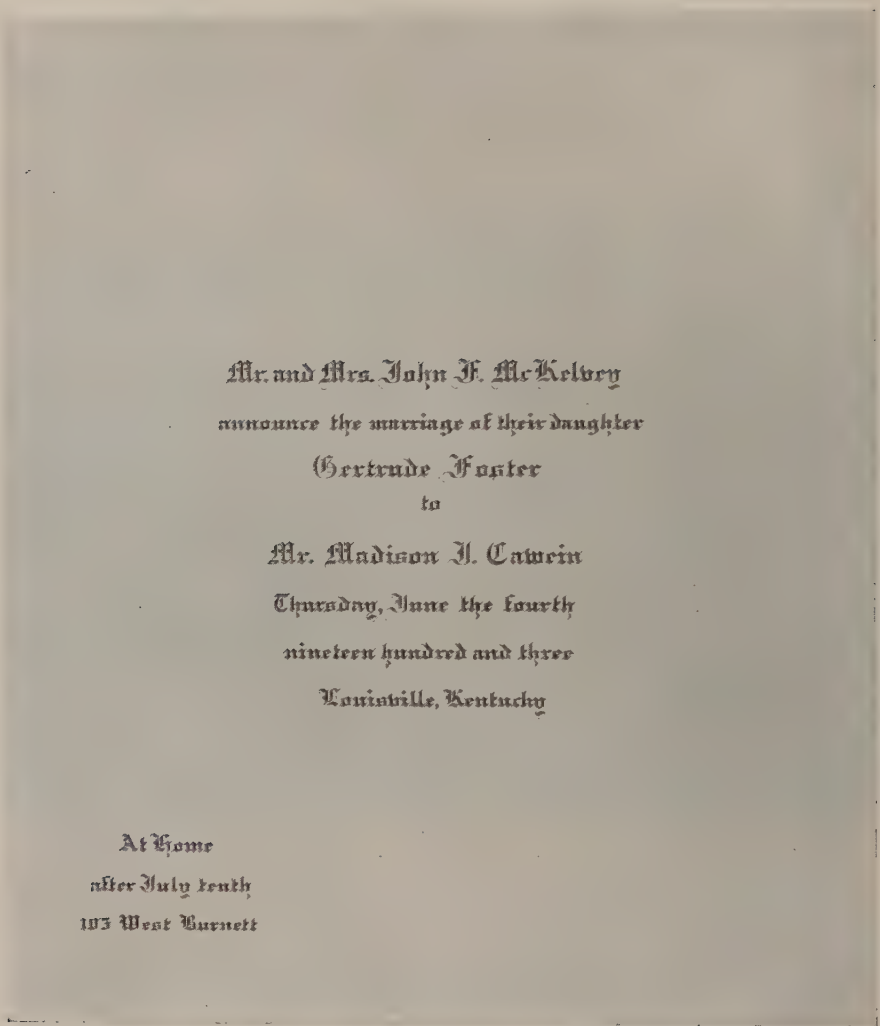
Cawein suggested to his friend J. Bernhard Alberts, in November, 1914: "If you'll paint a picture showing a faery wearing a necklace of dewdrops on a gossamer thread, I'll write a poem on it." Cawein died a few weeks later. In 1918 the artist painted "The Gossamer Thread," inspired by the Poet of the Fairies, and the Poet for Poets.

From an oil painting by Patty Thum, 1915

"Bluets and Springtime in Iroquois Park," painted in memory of Cawein who often went to Iroquois Park to see the bluets in bloom.

From an oil painting by Patty Thum, 1908

"Central Park and St. Paul's Church" showing church in which Mr. and Mrs. Cawein were married, and park near which they lived.


Mr. and Mrs. John F. McKelvey

announce the marriage of their daughter

Gertrude Foster

to

Mr. Madison J. Cawein

Thursday, June the fourth

nineteen hundred and three

Louisville, Kentucky

At Home

after July tenth

193 West Burnett

Facsimile of Wedding Announcement

Madison Julius Cawein and Gertrude Foster McKelvey were married in Louisville, Kentucky, on Thursday morning, June 4, 1903.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Mr. and Mrs. Cawein lived on the north side of Burnett Avenue, between First and Second streets, from June, 1903, to June, 1907.

From a photograph by Doerr, 1904

Mrs. Madison Cawein and son, Preston Hamilton Cawein. The boy—born March 18, 1904—is the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Cawein.

From a photograph by Doerr, 1905

Madison Cawein and son, Preston Hamilton Cawein. After the death of the poet, the son's name was changed to Madison Cawein II.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Mr. and Mrs. Cawein lived in a beautiful residence—center of picture—in St. James Court from June, 1907, to January, 1914. This house, owned by them, is now the property of their son.

From Book News Monthly, November, 1909

Cawein's private library contained about fifteen hundred volumes. Its bay window over the porch faced the Fountain and Court. Every room in the house was expressive of his artistic taste.

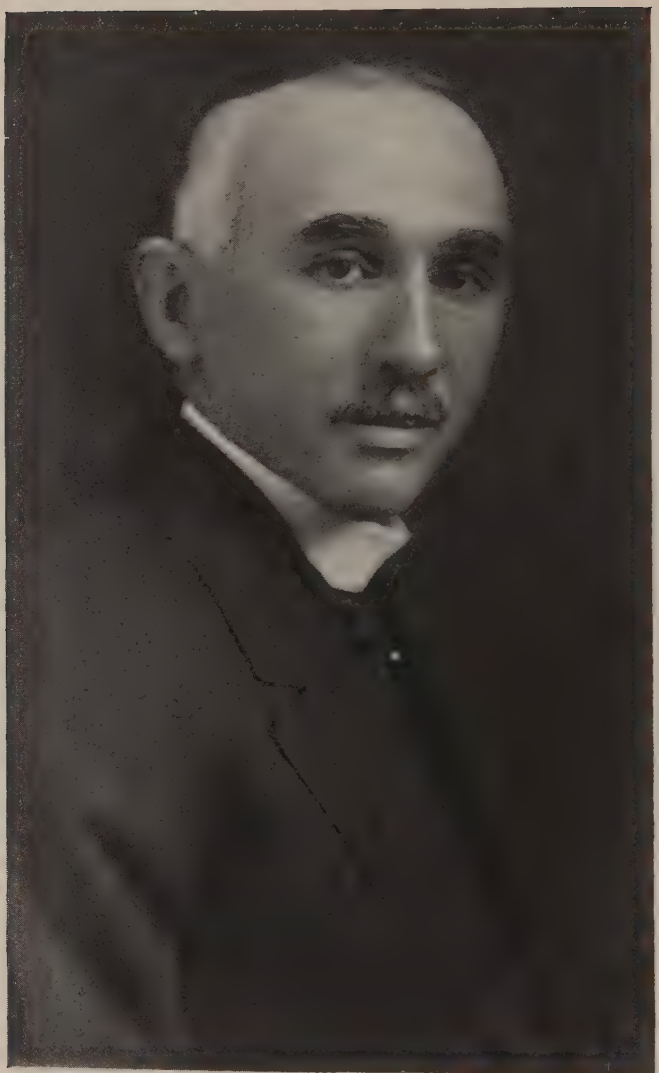
From a photograph by James Speed, 1912

Cawein frequently strolled through Shawnee Park, Louisville's park on the Ohio River, watching the sunset behind the Indiana Knobs, or the moonrise, or the river glittering to the stars.

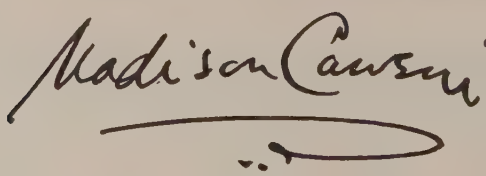
From a photograph by James S. Escott, 1912

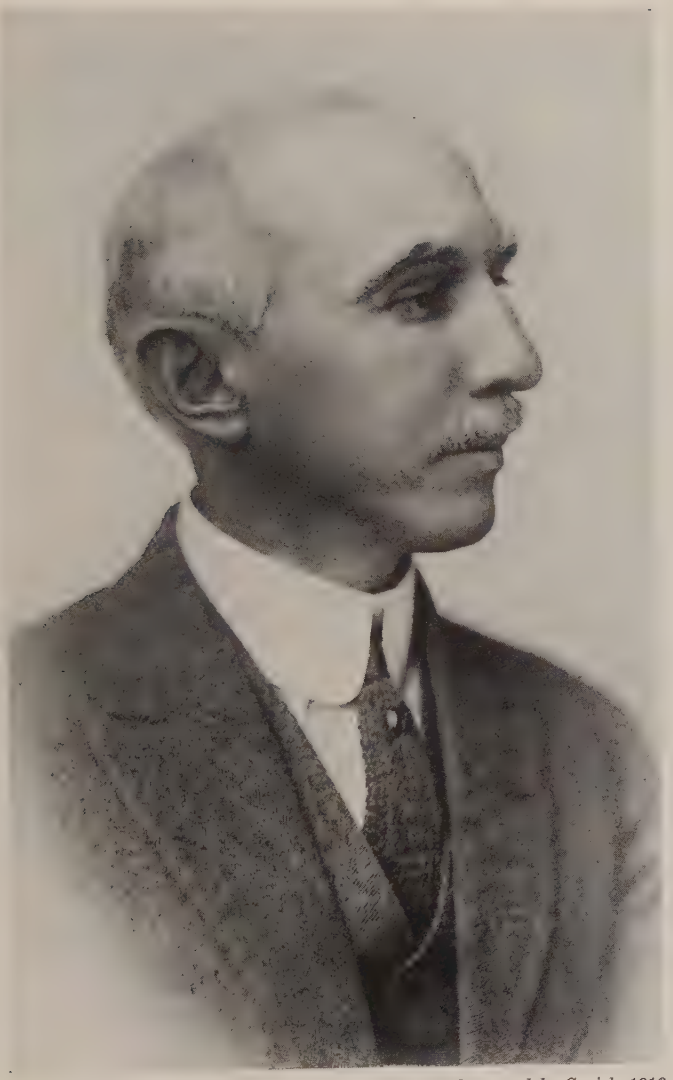
Among Cawein's haunts in Cherokee Park was the ruins of Ward's Old Corn Mill, on the Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek, where Pan and Faun, and wood and water nymphs held rendezvous.

Madison Cawein



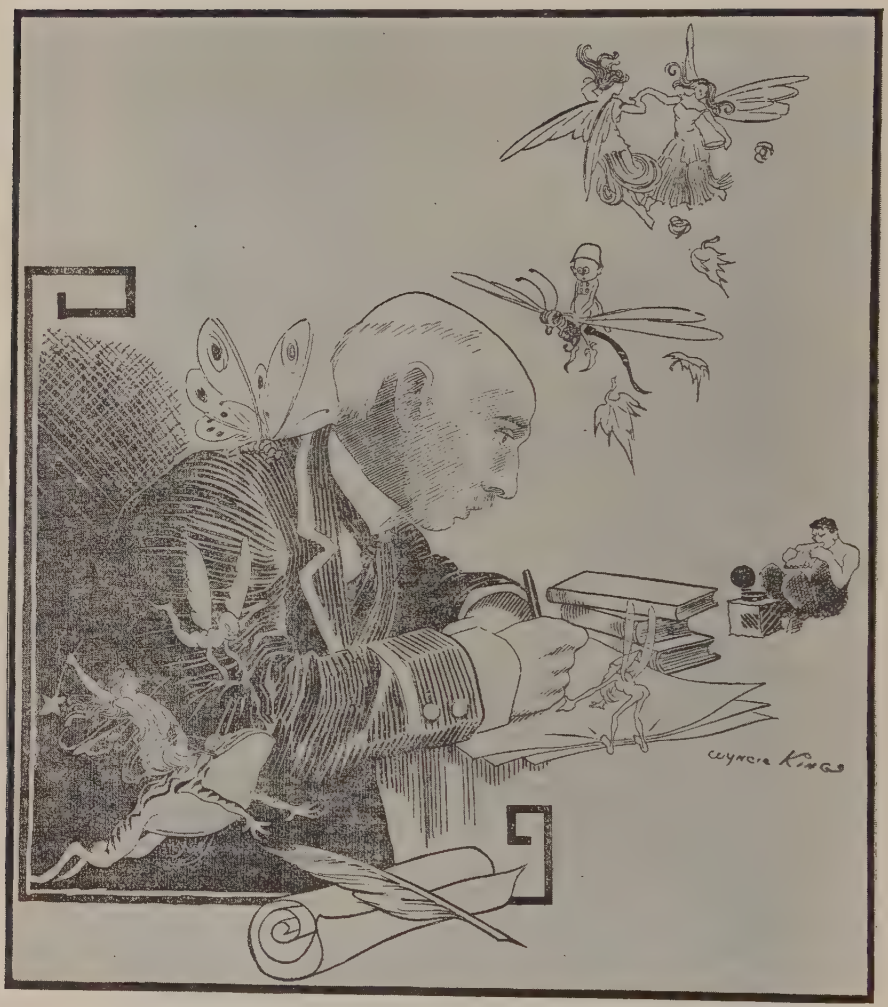
From a photograph by Steffens





From a photograph by Cusick, 1912

Madison Cawein



Cartoon by Wyncie King, Louisville Herald, March 26, 1912

Cawein as seen by Wyncie King when the many Louisville admirers of the poet presented him with a Silver Loving Cup on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of his first volume of poems.

HOBBIES
NO. 12
AND PEGASUS
LOUISVILLE'S LITERATI HONORED HIM THIS WEEK WITH A SILVER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF HIS DEBUT AS A POET
MADISON CAWEIN
"THE BARD OF THE BLUEGRASS"
BLUE PRINT DIAGRAM — PEGASUS THE POET'S STEED HAD TO MOVE HIS WINGS BACK SO MADISON COULD GET A FRONT SEAT.

Cartoon by Paul A. Plaschke, Louisville Evening Post, March 30, 1912

Cawein as seen by Paul A. Plaschke when the public presentation of the Silver Loving Cup took place in the Louisville Free Public Library on March 25, 1912, the poet's forty-seventh birthday.

The Silver Loving Cup presented to Madison Cawein, March 25, 1912, is ten and one-half inches high and bears the following inscription:

To Madison Cawein by the Literati of Louisville under the Auspices of the Louisville Literary Club.

To Commemorate the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Publication of his First Book, *Blooms of the Berry*.

March Twenty-fifth, 1887—1912.

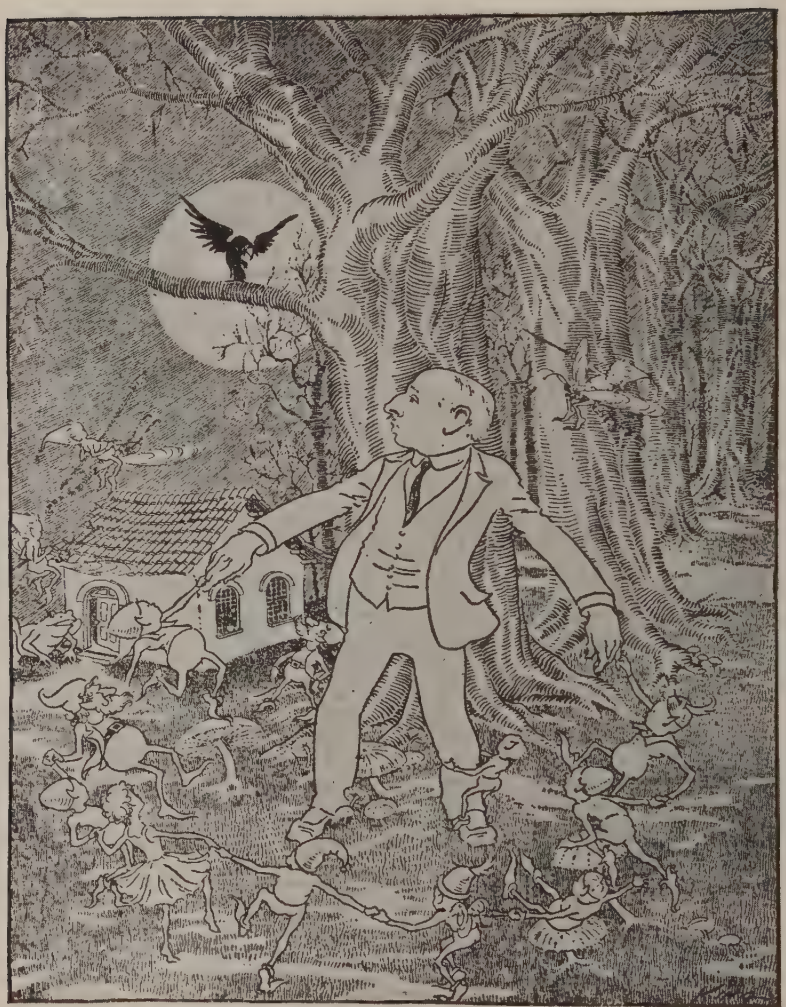
The inscription on the Bronze Bust of Madison Cawein (by James L. Roop) presented to the Louisville Free Public Library reads: Madison Cawein, a Kentucky Tribute to a Kentucky Poet, Presented by The Louisville Literature Club, April 25, 1913.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

The Caweins, in January 1914, moved into the right hand apartment on the third floor of the St. James Apartment House, in St. James Court. There the poet died of apoplexy, December 8, 1914.

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

Cawein was buried from the First Unitarian Church, Fourth and York streets. Opposite that church stands the Louisville Free Public Library where the poet spent many hours reading books and magazines.

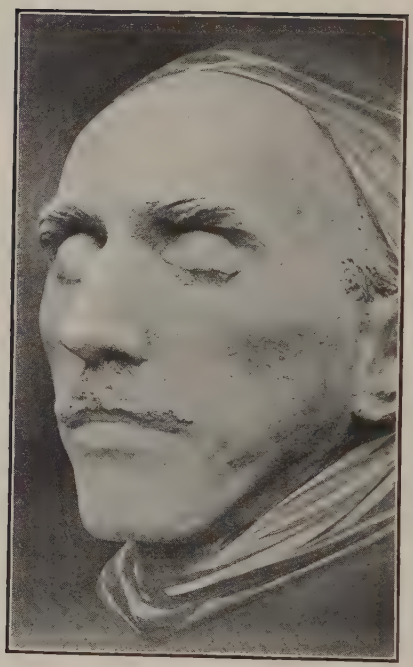


Cartoon by Wyncie King, Louisville Herald, December 9, 1914

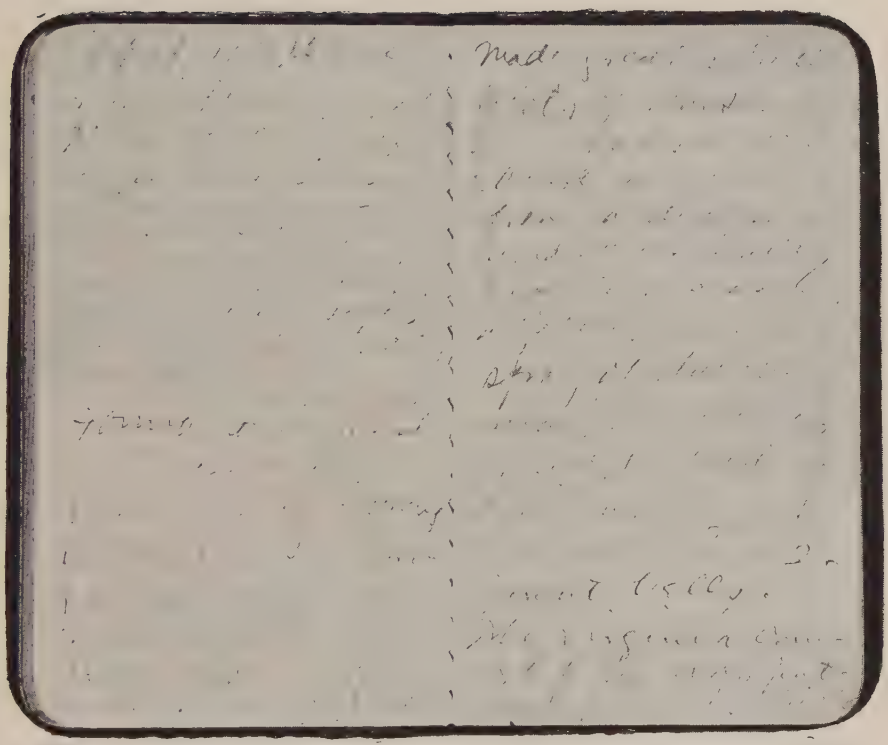
The Louisville press devoted many columns to Cawein at the time of his illness and death. The Louisville Herald published this cartoon by Wyncie King: "In Avalon, The Fairy Isle in Fairy Seas."

From a photograph by Hesse, 1920

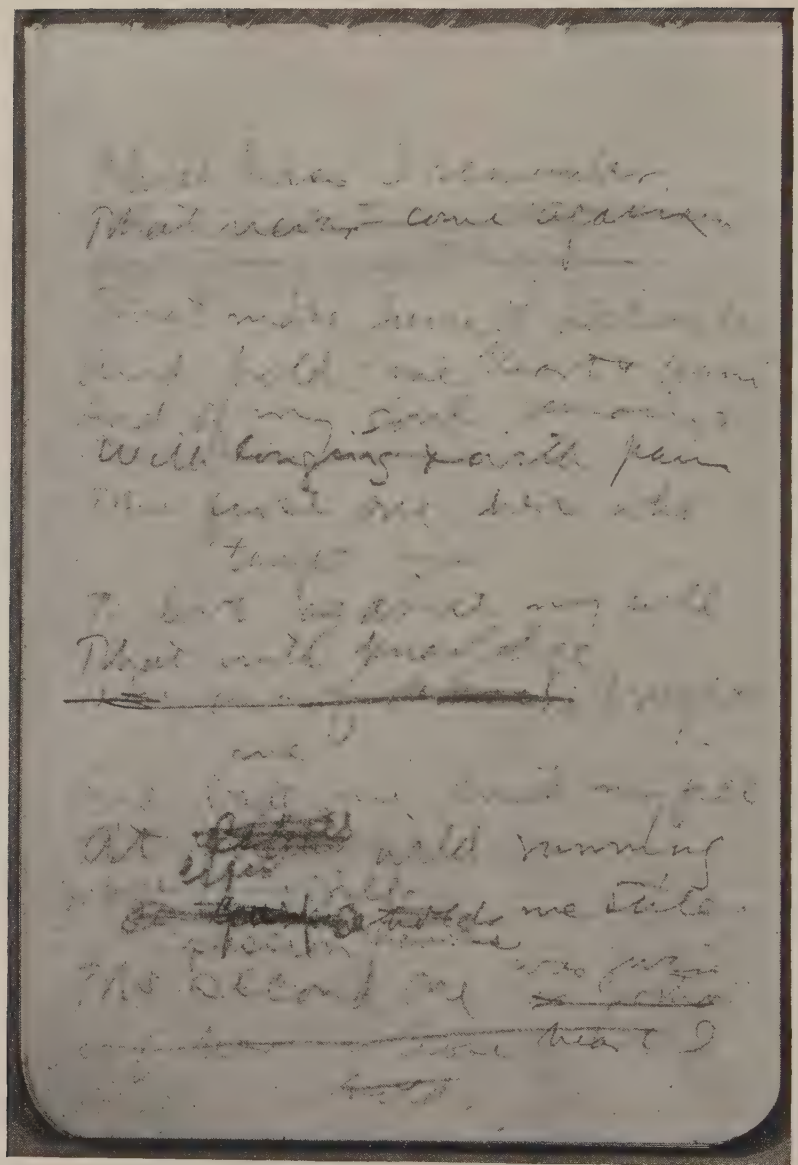
Cawein was buried in Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville. At the head of his grave is that of his father, marked by the tall stone. At the side of his grave is that of his wife who died on April 16, 1918.



Death-mask of Madison Cawein, made by James L. Roop.



Cawein filled many note-books, but as far as known, preserved very few. The two pages here shown were printed, after some changes were made, in 1906, in *Nature Notes and Impressions in Prose and Verse.*



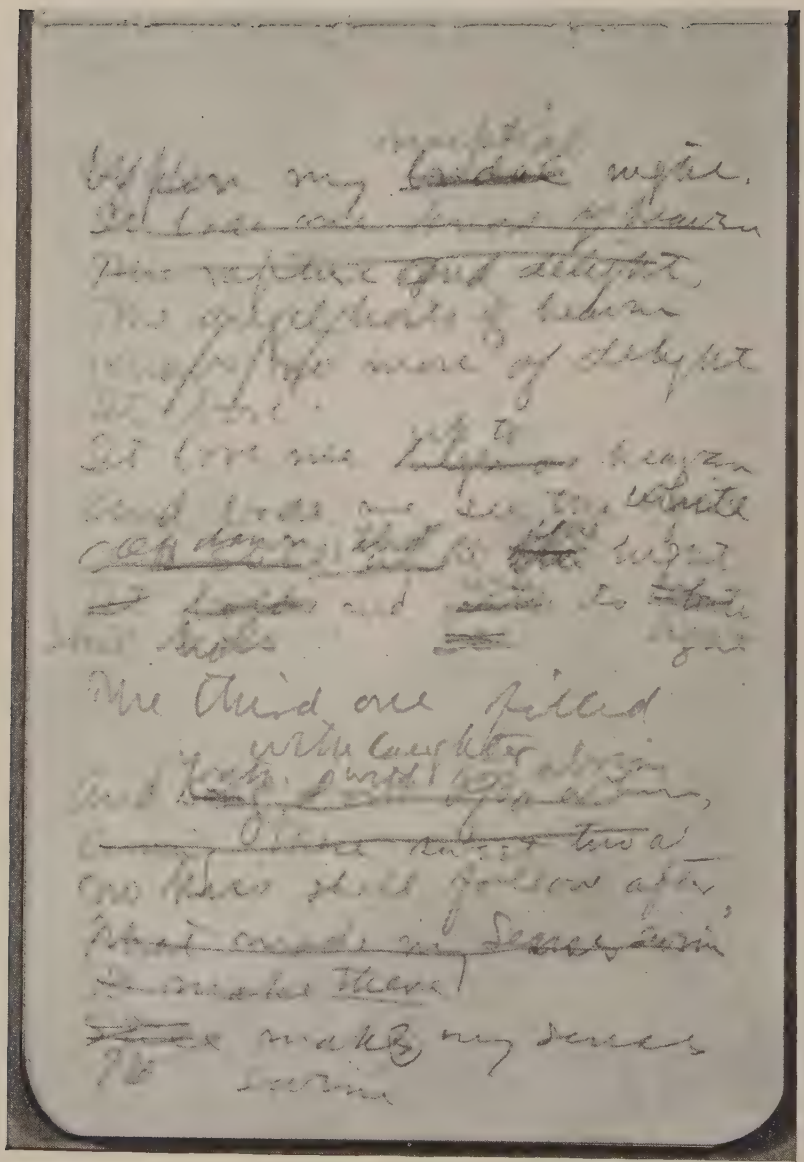
Facsimile of the first of three pages in a composing note-book used by Cawein when writing in the woods—probably the year 1914. As far as is known this poem, here shown in process, was never finished.

Three kisses I remember
That never come again
That make June of December
And hold me heart and brain
(And of my soul remain—)
(With longing and with pain)

The first one hers who taught me
To love against my will,
That into knowledge brought me
And bade me drink my fill
(At life's wild running rill—)
(Whose passion haunts me still)

The second one was given

A transcription of the lines shown on the opposite page.

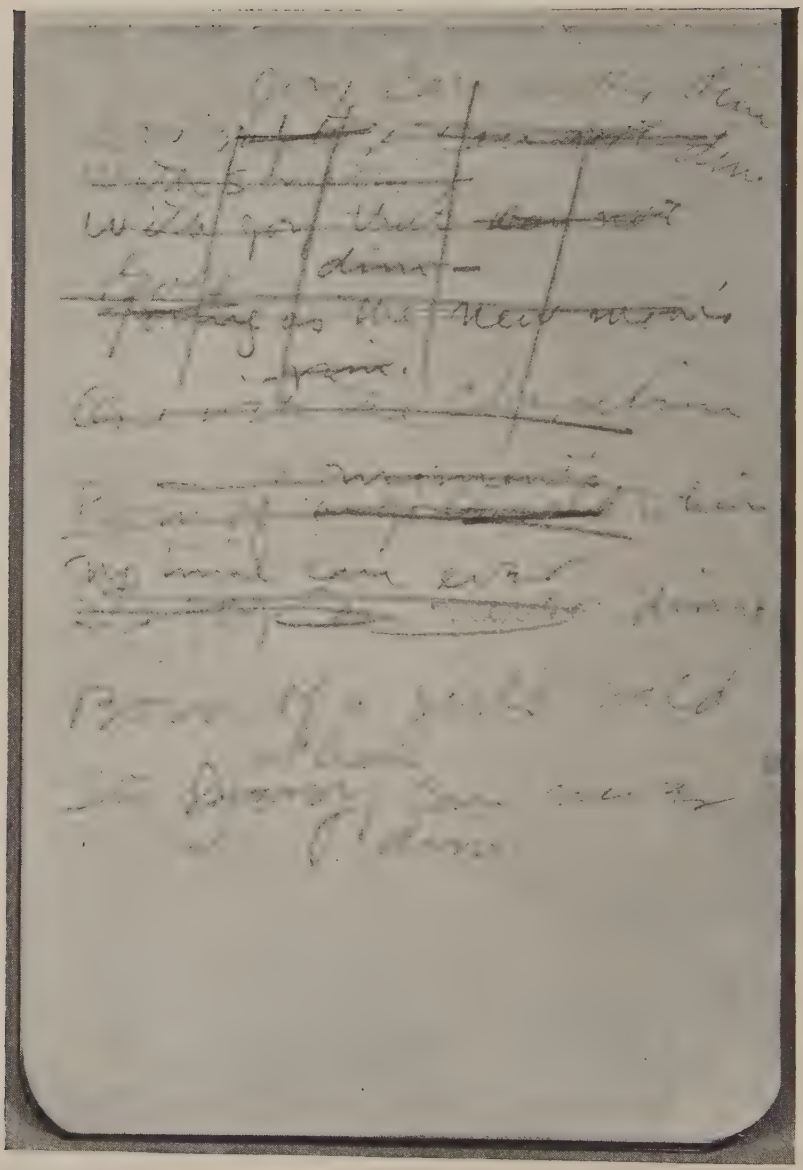


Facsimile of the second of three pages in a note-book used by Cawein.

Upon my nuptial night
(It bade me know of heaven
The rapture and delight)
The angel hosts of heaven
Know no more of delight
(It bore me up to heaven
And bade me see the white
Of dawn that on that height
Still holds me with its light.

The third one, filled with laughter
And youth with joy abrim
No kiss shall follow after
To make my senses swim.

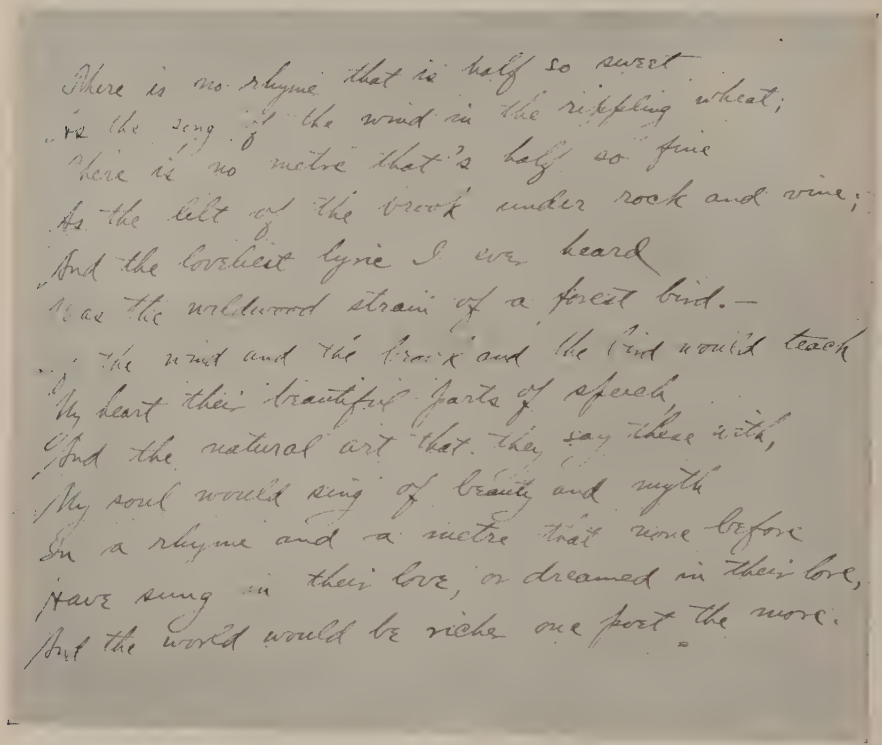
A transcription of the lines shown on the opposite page.



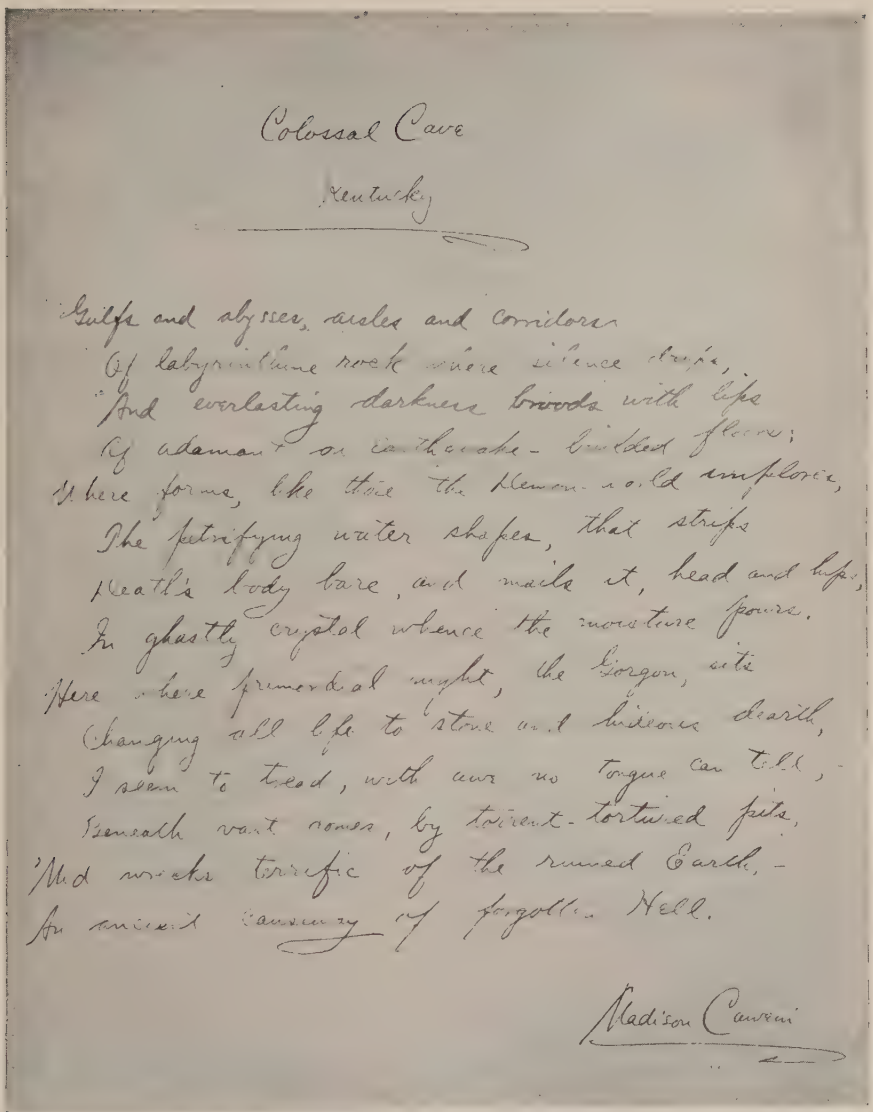
Facsimile of the third of three pages in a note-book used by Cawein.

(Its joy can never dim—
With joy that cannot dim—
Young as the new moon's rim—
Gold as the new moon's rim—
One with the cherubim—
Born of a moment's whim—
No time can ever dim—
Born of a girl's wild whim—
Its joy can never dim)

A transcription of the lines shown on the opposite page.


There is no rhyme that is half so sweet
As the song of the wind in the rippling wheat;
There is no metre that's half so fine
As the lilt of the brook under rock and vine;
And the loveliest lyric I ever heard
Was the wildwood strain of a forest bird.—
The wind and the brook and the bird would teach
My heart their beautiful parts of speech,
And the natural art that they say these with,
My soul would sing of beauty and myth
In a rhyme and a metre that none before
Have sung in their love, or dreamed in their lore,
But the world would be richer one poet the more.

Reduced facsimile of a completed manuscript. This poem was first published as the Proem to *Myth and Romance*, 1899, and a few years later republished in two of Madison Cawein's other books.



Colossal Cave

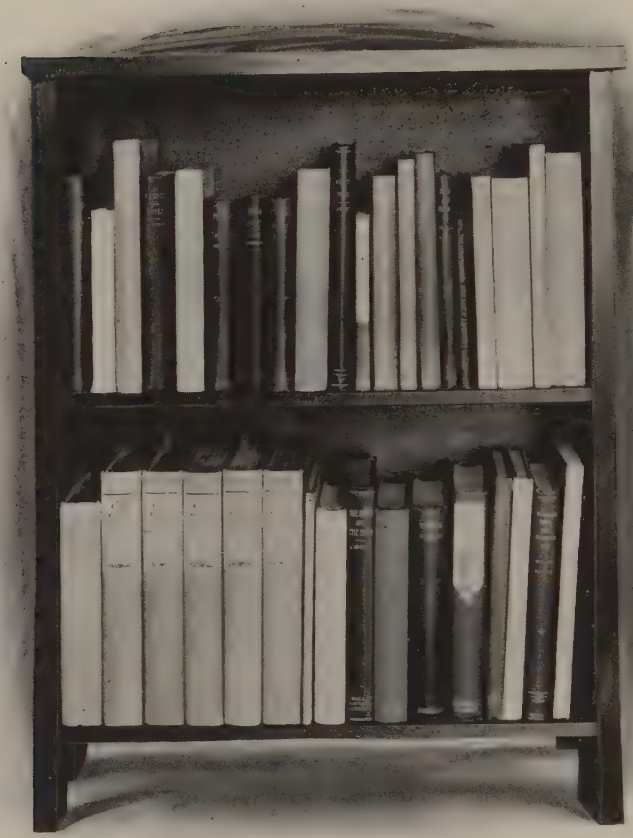
Kentucky

Gulfs and abysses, aisles and corridors
Of labyrinthine rock where silence dwells,
And everlasting darkness broods with lips
Of adamant or icebrake-bridled flows;
Where forms, like these the Demon would implore,
The petrifying water shapes, that strips
Death's body bare, and casts it, head and hips,
In ghastly crystal whence the moisture pours.
Here where primordial night, the Gorgon, sits
Changing all life to stone and hideous dearth,
I seem to tread, with awe no tongue can tell,
Beneath vast vaults, by torrent-tortured pits,
Mid wracks terrific of the ruined Earth,—
An ancient causeway of forgotten Hell.

Madison Cawein

Reduced facsimile of a completed manuscript. "Caverns" was written in 1898 and shortly thereafter printed in a newspaper or magazine. It was later republished in three of Madison Cawein's books.

Madison Cawein



The thirty-six books by Madison Cawein contain about 2700 poems; about 1500 are distinct originals and about 1200 are either unchanged reprints or changed versions. His original versions comprise the greater part of twenty-five books. *The Poems of Madison Cawein*, in five large volumes, is a Compilation of his poems—in the original or in a new version—written before 1907. Six books consist chiefly of Selections he made from previous volumes. The Compilation and the various Selections cause many of his poems—some in the original, others in a changed version—to appear two or more times.

II

THE YOUTH OF CAWEIN

Madison Julius Cawein—Madison Cawein, the Kentucky poet—was born in Louisville, Kentucky, March 23, 1865, in a two-story frame house on the south side of Jefferson Street, opposite the Jefferson County Court House. The old store and residence was torn down many years ago, and on its site now stands a three-story brick building, numbered 506 West Jefferson Street, and at present occupied by W. C. Priest and Company. In the *Louisville City Directory* for 1865 the entry pertaining to his father reads: "William Cawein, confectioner, 176 West Jefferson; residence same." The directories indicate that the Caweins had lived in this house a few years previous to Madison's birth and that in 1866 the family moved to "477 West Jefferson, between Twelfth and Thirteenth." From 1870 to 1872 the Caweins occupied a house on the "North side Broadway, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth," and there conducted a bakery and confectionery. As early as about 1864 William Cawein began a "root business" in the rear of his store, where he bought and sold medicinal roots and herbs, and made a patent medicine known as "Panavera." In those years he was frequently called upon to act as chef at the Galt House, then one of the largest and most famous hotels in the South.

In the spring of 1874, William Cawein accepted the post of manager of Rock Springs Hotel, a resort some twenty miles east of Louisville, near Brownsboro, on a hill overlooking the South Fork of Harrod's Creek. The place was built in 1870 and about six years later was destroyed by fire. Nothing remains of this short-lived, but well-known resort, except an old stone milk house, from which there flows, now as then, a clear water spring. William Cawein was fully qualified to conduct the business affairs of this hotel, for he was not only an experienced confectioner and chef, but also had the advantage of having acted as caterer at many celebrated banquets served in Louisville. The Caweins, however, remained only a year and a half in the country for during their entire stay Mrs. Cawein was in poor health and the family therefore decided to return to Louisville. The stay at Rock Springs gave William Cawein a better

opportunity than he theretofore had to study medicinal plants. And, as to the effect this life in the country had on his son Madison, then a boy aged nine years, the poet himself many years later wrote in his Questionnaire, a document quoted in full in another chapter of this volume: "There for the first time I came in contact with wild nature. Beautiful and majestic was nature there, of rocks and trees and waters. The old water mill [Babbit's Mill] in the valley of Rock Springs has played an important part in my poems of this locality, which I have celebrated in verse now for thirty years." It was the poet's first glimpse of Avalon.

At Rock Springs Madison Cawein first met Mr. and Mrs. George A. Babbit and their children, Harry A., Roy E., and Carrie May, who lived on a nearby farm. All of them are represented by characters in *The Poet and Nature.* Later, during his high school years, he began a long series of visits to the Babbits. The first of these was in 1884 when, as we shall see, he and his cousin Charles G. Roth spent part of the summer there. From that time on down to about 1908 the poet was the guest of the Babbits nearly every year and was frequently accompanied by his brothers and sister and some of his cousins. His brother William and his cousin Frederick, both of whom were artists, made more of these visits with him than any other of his kinsmen. All of the Babbits are now dead; the old mill disappeared many years ago, the Babbit house is falling into ruins and the fields and forests have undergone many changes; but their influence over the poet in his youth and later years has immortalized the Babbit neighborhood as the heart of the Cawein country.

In the fall of 1875 the Caweins came back to Louisville and for about six months lived at Franklin and Buchanan streets, in a house still standing and still known as The Barnes' Slate House. The poet, later pictured that place in "The House of Shadows," a ghost story in prose: "I had never liked the house with its grey slate roof and its two peaked gables; its sodden and grassless yard, shadowy with sickly smelling eucalyptus trees; its sad garden of weedy flowers, general neglect and damp odor of decay."

In the spring of 1876, or as Cawein once expressed it to me, "the spring of the Centennial," the family moved up on the Knobs near New Albany, Indiana, in the hope that the mother, who had been in poor health about two years, would be benefited by the change. There Mrs. Cawein regained her strength within a few months and the family continued to live on its twenty-acre, hill-top farm until the spring of 1879.

Charles G. Roth, of St. Paul, Minnesota, cousin of Madison Cawein, and a native of Louisville, writing to me on the childhood days of the poet says:

"My recollections of my days on the Knobs are not very distinct, for I was a boy of only about eight years when I lived there for a short

time with the Caweins. I remember, however, that Madison enjoyed playing with his 'company' of lead soldiers. He kept them in the pink of condition, and I was always admonished to be careful not to break them when he got them out of their hiding place. They were exceedingly frail, and some disaster invariably happened when I joined him in putting them through 'maneuvers.'

"I can visualize the old 'haunted house,' across the road from the one in which the Cawein family lived, but I more especially remember the 'tub nights' when every one of us boys took turns in a scrubbing under the auspices of Aunt Ana, Madison's mother. This tub feature was particularly distasteful to me as a child, because of an incident that never ceased to bring out the utmost mirth whenever it was related; and it was related as late as 1907 by Madison himself, the last time I saw him, at the funeral services of my grandfather John Cawein.

"The circumstances were these: I was 'billeted' with the family on the Knobs for the benefit of my health. A part of the treatment was frequent herb baths. One day while I was immersed in the bath, a storm began to rage. The entire family was diverted and gave vent to their various emotions from sundry points of observation. It was absolutely impossible for me to extricate myself from that tub, for I was securely covered with a strong waterproof cloth. I shrieked and begged to be released so that I might see the storm.

"The situation appealed to Madison's sense of humor; he teased me about it on every possible occasion, and took delight in telling others—giving gesticulations of my frenzied efforts and wails of disappointment."

The cottage the Caweins occupied on the Knobs has undergone few changes, but the garden of old-fashioned flowers and some of the trees that stood on the hill have disappeared. The family did not pretend to do any real farming, although the place was well supplied with poultry, cows and horses, and buildings such as are usually found on a farm. A large vegetable garden was one of its features. Going for the cows and working in the garden were among the duties of young Madison and his brothers. At night when the children were busy with their school lessons and story books, the mother was occupied with literature on psychology and spiritualism. In the meantime the father, who had already become known as Doctor Cawein, was studying anatomy, pharmacy and botany. Dr. Cawein was especially interested in medicinal plants and during his three years on the Knobs gathered many roots and herbs, not only for experimental purposes, but also for use in the medicines he made and sold.

All sections of the Indiana Knobs offer beautiful landscapes; but none is more majestic than the one seen from the Cawein

cottage. Standing in the yard on the east side of their house young Cawein undoubtedly often paused over the view that lay before him, and must have been much impressed with its grandeur. Across the Ohio River and in the distance beyond the valley he could see two forest covered hills which later became known as Iroquois Park and Kenwood Hill. He could not have realized that in these very places lay a great part of what was soon to become his Avalon and Elysium.

The poet spent his eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth years in the hills of Southern Indiana. Later, in 1914, in his comments on this period of his life, he wrote in his Questionnaire "My recollections of our home in the Knobs are among my most vivid and pleasant; though poor, we were happy." In a letter to Hubert G. Shearin, written in November, 1907, he sums up his life near New Albany. The facts then furnished to Mr. Shearin were first published in the *Library of Southern Literature*, from which they have been quoted by a number of writers:

"Afterwards we moved to Indiana—back of New Albany among the hills—on what is called the Knobs. Here I formed my great love for nature. For nearly three years we lived there in a small farmhouse on the top of a hill, surrounded by wooded hills and orchards, meadows and cornlands. If ever a boy and his brothers and sister were happy they were happy there. We walked to New Albany to school, a district school, every school-day from fall to spring, a distance of two and a half miles, but we enjoyed it. At least I know I did. I used to love to walk along by myself making up wonderful stories of pirate treasures and remarkable adventures which I continued from day to day in my imagination. It was a serial usually that I could continue unendingly—and which was dependent upon no publisher for future installments."

In the early part of 1879 the Caweins returned to Louisville. After living at Twenty-fourth and Main streets a few months, they moved to High Avenue, between Twelfth and Thirteenth streets, near Thirteenth, first on the north side and shortly thereafter on the south side of the street. The house on the south side was a two-story brick overlooking the Ohio River. The city directory for 1880 notes William Cawein as "physician, 98 Seventh Street, near Jefferson; residence 51 High Avenue, near Thirteenth." The entry for 1881 reads: "William Cawein, patent medicines, 98 Seventh Street, near Jefferson; residence, 40 High Avenue, near Thirteenth." In 1882 the numbering system throughout the city was changed and the entry for William Cawein became, "patent medicines, 332 Seventh; residence 1224 High Avenue." Dr. Cawein's classification remained as "patent medicines" until 1887 when it was changed to "physician" and continued as such until the time of his death.

It was while living on High Avenue that Dr. Cawein began to devote practically all his time to the making of medicines. He was not

a graduate of any school, but his self education was so thorough that he was permitted to practice medicine without a license. He maintained a well equipped office and laboratory where he manufactured a number of remedies. He advertised them as "Dr. Wm. Cawein's Vegetable Family Medicines." Four of his patent medicines appear on his price-list printed in 1881: "Dr. Wm. Cawein's Halesia—For all Malarial and Contagious Fevers. Price $1.50;" "Dr. Wm. Cawein's Pannecia, or Blood Purifier. Price $1.00;" "Dr. Wm. Cawein's Chill Cure. Price $1.00;" "Dr. Wm. Cawein's Panavera—For all disorders of the Stomach and Bowels. Price $1.00." His oldest and best known medicine was "Panavera"—a remedy he began manufacturing about 1864 and patented on February 13, 1866. He claimed that his "Vegetable Family Medicines" or "Remedies" were cures for certain ailments only and guaranteed them as such. Unlike many other men in the same business, he did not advertise any preparation as a "cure-all."

During the years the Caweins lived on High Avenue, young Madison attended school and often found time to help his father compound roots and herbs and barks and leaves into remedies. He was ever devoted to his mother, and seldom lost an opportunity to assist her in the work around the house, especially in her flower garden. Mrs. Cawein had always had more or less of a predilection for spiritualism, but about the time the family moved from the Knobs back to Louisville she began to take a greater interest in the subject.

When Mrs. Cawein realized she possessed the power of mediumship she sometimes lent her services in that capacity to some of her friends, who were interested in spiritualism. Among them was Edward Shippen, of Louisville. From April, 1879, to February, 1880, Mr. Shippen took down verbatim a number of messages received through her from certain spirits while she was in a trance. These messages consist principally of comments on this life and on the hereafter, and were printed twelve years later (1892) in Boston in a volume of 182 pages entitled *Woman and Her Relations to Humanity.* No author's name is given; the preface is signed "Reporter." Mr. Shippen was the "Reporter" and also the compiler of the book, but there is nothing on the title page or in the preface to indicate that it was he who prepared the MS. for print. The volume is "Dedicated to Mrs. Annie C. Cawein." Her picture and a facsimile of her signature, "Christiana Cawein," serve as the frontispiece. It may be well to explain that Mrs. Cawein was known as "Aunt Ana" among her relatives and her most intimate friends.

Madison Cawein was present not only when some of these messages were transmitted through his mother to Mr. Shippen, but also before and after that time when other seances took place. It is probable that Mrs. Cawein's spiritual conception of material things had a prenatal or a postnatal influence in the forming of the poetical

visions of her son Madison, and that his mother's love of flowers and her interest in spiritual communication played a part in his early artistic development.

The neighborhood on High Avenue where the old Cawein home was situated no longer exists. The ground was cleared many years ago and converted into a railroad yard. Miss Emily F. Bass, of Louisville, a friend and former neighbor of the Caweins, in a recent letter to me touching on this period of the poet's life, says:

"In the early eighties our family and the Caweins were next door neighbors on High Avenue, between Twelfth and Thirteenth streets. Madison Cawein—or Mat, as everyone in the neighborhood called him—was a high school boy. In our family were my sister and myself, about the ages of Mat and his sister Lilian. My recollections of the Caweins and the time we spent with them are most pleasant.

"The homes occupied by the Caweins and by us were two story brick houses. Our back yard, where we children spent most of our time, terraced down to the river. From this vantage point we could see Corn Island, much worn and always alluring, the Indiana shore beyond it, and in the distance, the Knobs. The blue sky overhead, the river's wide stretch of tawny yellow, and the small island in the foreground presented a scene ever inviting and interesting to us. On the terraced ground near the river or on the island, Mat often sprawled at our feet, reading or telling stories. Many times he spoke of a mystical woman in white, on a snow-white steed, galloping before and beckoning him, so he said, to follow to the land of fairies. In winter our terraces were used as coasting places. The Cawein boys would steer for us, and Mat made up jingle after jingle as we coasted toward the river or trudged back to the starting point. He loved the open, especially the frosty, invigorating air.

"His father was an herb doctor and personally gathered many of the roots and herbs he sold. Mat frequently accompanied him in his wanderings through the country in search of medicinal plants. Upon his return he gave us glowing accounts of the birds and flowers he had seen or of the fairies and ghosts and haunted places he said he had fallen in with on the excursion.

"The supernatural, as well as the world of nature, made a strong appeal to him. I can still hear him reciting to us from 'Macbeth' quotations beginning 'Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd,' or 'Thou canst not say I did it: Never shake thy gory locks at me.' We read and re-read *Don Quixote*, and also many other books and poems. He often stood on a box or barrel and read or recited to us as a professional would address a large and learned audience.

"Mrs. Cawein was always kind to us children. She was interested in spiritualism, and Mat suggested to us that perhaps the equestrian lady he so frequently saw and described was her control. One day he brought a letter to my mother. It was from Mrs. Cawein and per-

tained to an invalid baby brother of ours. She expressed deep sympathy for us and concluded with a declaration that an Indian spirit had urged her to suggest the use of certain roots and herbs for the sick child. We never tried the prescription, but we kept the letter for many years.

"We children felt that Mat was not the everyday kind of a boy. In his absence we frequently commented on the characteristics that made him seem different. His love for reading and telling wild tales, his many visions, his gentleness and his unusual deference to his mother and sister set him apart from the other boys we knew. Little did we dream that this high school boy would some day rank as one of the great nature poets of the world."

Miss Bass' statement that young Cawein frequently accompanied his father on his wanderings through the country in search of medicinal plants agrees with the recollections of a number of other persons who knew him in his youth. Dr. Cawein was an herbalist and an "herb doctor," and also a close and appreciative observer of nature. That the poet regarded his father a naturalist is shown in the poem he wrote of him after his death: "One Who Loved Nature." It must have been from his father, during these rambles in the country, that the embryo poet began to learn the names of trees and flowers and birds and insects he saw in the woods and fields and was able to use afterward so beautifully as symbols and in similies.

Probably Cawein's wonderful knowledge of nature can be attributed to his association with his father who was an "herb doctor," just as his supernatural fancies can be attributed to his mother's psychic experience. These were probably the greatest influences which in the youth of Cawein molded his poetic nature.

Charles G. Roth, whose reminiscences of Madison Cawein's childhood are quoted on a preceding page, gives the following pertaining to the life of the young poet while a high school boy:

"What an interminable distance it seemed for my young legs to walk from our home on Hancock Street down to my cousins on High Avenue—two miles! Madison was the magnet around which we boys and girls vibrated. This may have been due partly to his attractive powers, and partly to the fact that we were pretty certain to find him just where we expected him to be. I recall the great interest Madison took in a certain periodical, the name of which I have since forgotten. It was a publication for boys older than those who read *The Youth's Companion*. Madison read it over and over, and often aloud to us; and when he had finished he laid the copies away in a most precise manner, pile on pile.

"During the few years the Caweins lived on High Avenue some of us children spent the greater part of the summers of 1884 and 1885 on the Babbit farm, adjacent to Rock Springs and near Brownsboro. About ten years previous the Caweins had lived at Rock

Springs and Madison had then, and during a few visits shortly thereafter, become familiar with the surrounding country. He knew the swimming holes, the best springs, the picturesque views and the places of silence, and he took a delight in guiding us to them.

"The first summer four of us went to the Babbits: Madison, his sister Lilian, my brother John and I. In those early days Madison had begun to rhyme. Many an hour was spent in scribbling poems. Sometimes these were inspired wholly by descriptions of the school teacher of the previous winter given us by Harry Babbit, the eldest of the Babbit children. Those were memorable vacation days. Lilian would stand on a rock at twilight, silhouetted against a young moon, singing 'By the Blue Alsatian Mountains,' while Madison was a-moon gazing, and the rest of us cavorted about, as children will, at approaching bed time.

"When bed time came we took our lamp, Madison, John and I, and ascended to our room, the only up-stairs room in the house. The Babbits were a very religious family, and there were always evening prayers before retiring. We boys had a pack of cards and sometimes we set the lamp on the floor and indulged in a game of casino, straining our ears for every approach of steps that might reveal the scandalous proceedings to the Babbits.

"In the second summer two more visitors were added to our party: Rose Cawein and Charles L. Cawein. Charlie was already addicted to the practice of medicine. He administered doses of an excellent herb concoction, prepared by his father, and I personally can testify, and so could Madison, to its efficacy as a preventive of cholera morbus.

"In 1913 when Madison was preparing *The Poet and Nature*, he wrote to me for some of my Babbit reminiscences. I offered a few facts that I thought might be helpful. Many an hour have I spent with this book and through it wandered back to my first visits to the country. I often wondered whether Madison's memory was at fault in some of the details or whether he intentionally exercised poetic license with some of the characters he used in the prose parts of this work. 'Mary' was Carrie May Babbit. Harry, not Roy, was the elder of the two Babbit boys. 'John' and 'Charlie' may be my brother John and myself—at least I like to think so. The incident regarding the baseball and the bees, described in prose on page 82, is absolutely true; I was one of the participants. [This incident, like many others narrated, took place on the Babbit farm.]

" 'The Ruined Mill' is the mill on the Babbit farm. Every time I saw Madison in the old place it was apparent that he was dreaming and wandering in the realms of romance. Every poem in *The Poet and Nature* appeals to me. This is especially true of the one on page 39, beginning, 'Where the path leads through the dell.' And so with some of the poems in his other books. His 'Standing-Stone Creek,' first

published in *Shapes and Shadows*, must have stirred his soul every time he recalled it, for in it he described what he regarded from early youth as one of his favorite haunts around Brownsboro.

"*The Poet and Nature* is set amid surroundings that witnessed the adolescence of Madison Cawein. I can scarcely realize that I was present when he wrote some of the rhymes that were among the first outward expressions of his inner development. Many of the poems in this and his other volumes hark back to his boyhood days at Babbit's. It was there that Nature made not only its first, but also its most indelible impressions on the boy who became the greatest nature poet of his time."

Madison Cawein attended the Louisville Male High School from September, 1881, to June, 1886. Thirty-four years later his friend and classmate, James B. Hebden, of Louisville, submitted to me the following regarding the poet and his school days:

"Madison was a quiet, studious boy and a model pupil. We fellows, however, did not regard him as an exceptionally brilliant student. I first knew him at the ward school at Thirteenth and Green streets. He and some of the other boys of that neighborhood later went to Center and Walnut streets where the higher grades, preparatory to entering high school, were taught, and I went to Seventeenth and Madison for the same purpose. In those years most of us were somewhat rough, but Madison, although frequently a spectator, never participated in our pranks. He was orderly, but not timid, and never indulged in practical jokes.

"Having lived in the country and in various parts of the city he missed much class work and saw very little of any one school until he entered high school, and as a consequence was the oldest in our class by at least one year. On entering high school he was less quiet and became more like the other boys. He was among the few who did not play ball, but he often took part in the stunts performed on the playground swings and ladders.

"Any one could get along with him, although he seemed to prefer the companionship of a certain few. Every member of his class liked him. One of his most intimate friends during his Junior year was Walter N. Burns. Many of us had nicknames. We called him 'The Poet Ike' because of the shape of his nose, and McKee was 'Rakey,' Gleason was 'Dago,' Hite was 'Tobe,' Hoeppner was 'Hop,' Drewry was 'Reddie' and I was 'The Hibernian.'

"Madison read a great deal, and even spent some recesses with books. One day when some of the boys were making confessions about reading Beadle's Half-Dime Novels on the sly, he told us he had 'a whole loftful' of them at home and had read every one.

"Even before he entered high school he impressed me as a lover of nature. He often went down to the Portland Ferry to look at the river, and from there sometimes crossed over to New Albany and

wandered up into the Knobs where he had lived a few years before. It was shortly after his sophomore year that he began writing poetry. One of his first efforts had some lines in it to the effect that he would like to live and die like Keats. [For the poem see *Nature Notes and Impressions*, page 2.] When this poem was published in a local paper, some of us boys teased him about it. I remember we told him that if he lived and died like Keats, his literary career would be over 'a macadamized road to a graveyard'—a hard road and its end soon reached. He did not resent our nonsense about his writing of poetry, but on the contrary took it in good part. He knew we were not serious, for when we arranged our literary programs, we never failed to include Cawein, and, furthermore, any and all ridicule we might have tried on him would have been outweighed by the encouragement he received from Professor Halleck.

"I remember on one occasion the Alethean Society of the girls' high school and our Athenaeum Society held a joint meeting. We brought out Madison as one of our choice products. George Drewry, the master of ceremonies, in a humorous speech introduced him and referred to him as 'Our Poet Ike.' This led many to infer that Madison was going to read something of a humorous character, but he came prepared to read a serious poem of his own, and although it was a long one, everybody enjoyed it, and our Society felt proud of him.

"Madison's word could always be depended upon and, furthermore, he was very considerate of his parents. During our senior year 'Rakey' McKee and I frequently rowed up the river in a skiff. On one occasion we invited 'The Poet Ike.' The time set for the trip had about arrived, but Madison was not yet in sight. A few moments later we saw him coming down the river bank. When he got to the boat, he said, 'Boys, you'll have to excuse me. My parents have a prejudice against the river. I'd like to go with you, but I'll have to beg off.' He always pronounced 'prejudice' as though ending with the word 'dice.' He had walked over a mile to keep us from waiting for him, and gave up this river trip to please his parents. He was always sincere and reliable and considerate of others.

"Two weeks before our commencement exercises an all day picnic was held in Central Park. The girls and boys of the graduating classes and their teachers ate dinner at one table. All of us were in the best of spirits. I can still hear Professor Halleck call, 'Madison, can you see pentameters in the movements of our jaws?' and our poet's answer, which was to the effect that everybody seemed to be working in 'gastronomic meters.'

"The Louisville Female High School commencement took place in Macauley's Theatre on the morning of June 10, 1886. There were thirty-six graduates. Our class of thirteen served as ushers. Madison was assigned the seats near the stage and performed his task in

Chesterfieldian style. If I am not mistaken, it was then that he first began to pay special attention to young ladies. I sat near him while the program was being rendered. Viewing the two semi-circles of girl graduates and listening to their recitations apparently impressed him more than a grand theatrical performance.

"The next night was our turn on the stage. When Madison was called upon, he stepped forward, made a dignified bow and proceeded to read the Class Poem slowly and distinctly and very seriously. The applause was great; our class was prouder than ever of its poet, and our pride has increased ever since. He and I often met in later years, and our school days were usually the principal topic of our talks. I like to look back on him as a perfectly fine human being, a person who was just natural, a regular fellow, with all his genius."

Professors Reuben Post Halleck and Robert H. Carothers were among the high school teachers of the young poet. Professor Halleck's reminiscences of Cawein's last years in school are given elsewhere in this volume. Professor Carothers in a letter to me writes:

"Madison Cawein as a student displayed the same qualities that marked his after life. He was the same quiet, refined, studious and observant individual as in his maturer years. He enjoyed the sports of the boys, but as an onlooker rather than a participator in their games. Oftentimes, however, during the recess he remained in a class room engaged in study. He was not what is called a brilliant student, but had to labor in order to obtain his information. As always in such cases, he retained what he learned and could use it discriminatingly.

"He was deeply interested in the study of English, in which I had the privilege of being his instructor for a while. Even then he delighted in poetry, and it would not be a difficult task to trace in his writings some influences derived from his study of Hale's *Longer English Poems* which was used as a text book. One of these is his fondness for unusual words, largely old English, which are found throughout his poems. One exercise he delighted in was the study of synonyms which he used with great discrimination. His success in the use of pure English shows that he kept up his studies in this respect during his life. An incident of this is shown by what he related to me after his return from a visit to Boston. Among others he met was Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, in the course of their conversation, asked Mr. Cawein where he had studied English. Mr. Cawein told the Doctor, and then added that the class had studied one of his books, which greatly pleased the genial Doctor.

" 'The boy is father of the man,' and Cawein the student foreshadowed Cawein the poet."

For many years, including the time Cawein attended school, the Louisville Male High School was the academic department of the

University of Louisville with full authority to award the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The only academic degree ever conferred upon Madison Cawein was the A. B. he received in Louisville, June 11, 1886. That day—his Commencement Day—may be regarded as the real beginning of his literary career. While a school boy he had written a number of poems, but not until after graduation did he have anything like a semblance of freedom to exercise his rapidly developing gift.

Cawein's literary activities covered a period of twenty-eight years. The first six years of his literary life were spent in the Newmarket, a pool room, where, as assistant cashier, he worked amid uncongenial surroundings; the twenty-two years that followed he devoted to poetry, although his health was poor the greater part of the time.

The Newmarket—named after the celebrated race-course in England—was an establishment in which was transacted a legalized business of betting on horses and selling auction pools on races. Commenting on his connection with this gambling house Cawein said to me: "I was a priest in the Temple of Mammon and was obliged to mingle with those who worshiped there." He was well qualified to fill the position, for he was honest, quick and reliable, and did not gamble. His salary was a good one from the beginning, and was frequently increased. This employment made it possible for him to pay for the publication of his first books and also permitted him to accumulate some money. His savings were judiciously invested in lands in eastern Kentucky, which soon thereafter paid a good profit. He lived on his income from poems sold to newspapers and magazines and the profits made later through stock speculations.

Practically all his time in his early manhood was taken up by clerical work in the pool room, literary work at home and rambles in the country. He, nevertheless, frequently found a few hours for his young lady friends. Shortly after he finished high school he began calling on a number of girls living in Portland, a western division of Louisville. In a recent interview one of the girls who knew young Cawein in those days, said to me:

"Madison often brought a book, a box of candy or a bouquet to the girls on whom he called, but he usually hid the present in the shrubbery or in a tree near the house, and after ringing the door bell and greeting his hostess, he would ask her to hunt for the hidden gift. And when she found it, she also found a few lines of original verse. Madison took an active part in the candy pullings, parlor dances, musical entertainments and such other amusements in which our little Portland club indulged. He differed from the other boys in that he was more quiet and seldom spoke of himself. Most of us had more or less to say about where we had been and what we had done since our last meeting. Madison, however, said very little on such subjects. He told us ghost stories.

"I remember one night eight or ten of us had gathered at the home of one of our friends then living in the Colonel Carr house, an old mansion-like residence said to be haunted. Madison was telling us a ghost story, and about the time we girls began to feel the presence of the ghosts that he pretended to see in the room, one of the boys quietly slipped down into the cellar and slowly turned off the gas. While the light was fading away, we clustered around Madison, assuming that if there was to be any protection from ghosts, it must come from him. The instant the room was in total darkness all of us, shrieking and trembling, rushed upon Madison. He was completely lost in our embraces, but dramatically continued his story until some one brought in a lighted lamp and restored order. After we had recovered from the fright, Madison simply said: 'Many a caress, but not a kiss; let's try it all over again.'

"In a few years our Portland group began to scatter, and Madison, who was then about twenty-three years of age, drifted, like the rest of us, into circles in other parts of the city."

Cawein always enjoyed impromptu and unceremonious gatherings and avoided formal social functions whenever possible. One of his greatest pleasures from early youth was to wander through fields and forests and to loiter around old homes. He spent about four years of his boyhood in the Brownsboro country and in the New Albany Knobs, and ever thereafter made pilgrimages to these scenes. Sometimes he went alone and sometimes with friends. He severed his connection with the Newmarket in order to devote all his time to literature and to the exploring of the near-by country, and he soon became familiar with every hill and valley near Louisville. He loved them all, but the scenes that were always dearest to him were the hills and valleys amid which he spent his youth.

III

CAWEIN'S LIFE AS RECORDED BY THE LOUISVILLE PRESS

The following clippings present the life of Cawein as recorded in his own time by the Louisville press. Reviews of Cawein's works are not included in this chapter, except an advance notice of his first book:

1886, June 12, *Courier-Journal.* [A column devoted to the Commencement Exercises of the Louisville Male High School held in Macauley's Theatre on June 11, contains the following relative to Mr. Cawein]:

"The Class of '86" was the subject of an original poem ["Mariners"] of metrical and intrinsic excellence, by Mr. M. J. Cawein. It is a dangerous compliment, always, to speak of a young man as having poetic genius, but the vigorous thought as well as the rhythmical beauty of Mr. Cawein's poem forced that opinion from those who listened to him.

1886, June 12, *Louisville Commercial.* [From a column report on the Commencement Exercises]:

An original poem, "The Class of '86," was next read by M. J. Cawein. The vividness of imagination and command of language shown by the young poet indicate that he has wooed the muses with great success.

1887, September 18, *Louisville Commercial.* A LOUISVILLE POET. WRITINGS OF MADISON J. CAWEIN. HIS BOOK OF NEW POEMS—*Blooms of the Berry.* [The first press notice of Mr. Cawein's first book]:

Madison J. Cawein, whose name is in a degree already familiar to the newspaper-reading public as a writer of some clever verse, has in the hand of John P. Morton & Company, a volume of his poems, which will be ready about the first of October.

The book will contain about ninety per cent. of poems heretofore unprinted, and those who have only read his contributions to the local press will be surprised at the especial excellence of many poems of his work. Cawein is very young, and most of the verse in his maiden book was written before he was twenty years of age. He is but twenty-two now, and is a Louisville boy and a graduate of the High School.

With characteristic modesty, Mr. Cawein, in his "Proem" says:

> Though the grander flowers I sought,
> But these berry-blooms to you,
> Evanescent as their dew,
> Only these I brought.

Of course, the modesty of a poet is characteristic, if not worse, but these lines are very ingenuous.

His themes are as varied as the rainbow, though the title of the book, *Blooms of the Berry*, would indicate principally pastoral poetry. The titles show for themselves the range of subjects, as they are pretty well chosen, for instance: "By Wold and Wood," "Anticipation," "A Lament," "Distance," "Spring Twilight," "Stars," "Ghosts," "The Tollman's Daughter," "Harvesting," "The White Evening," "The Jessamine and the Morning-glory," and "The Dream of Christ."

A few extracts will serve as material from which the reader may form an opinion of the merit of the work. They are made at random; the last verse of the first poem, a very melancholy piece, by which, however, the reader's mind should not be prejudiced, and runs thus:

> The lone white stars that glitter;
> The stream's complaining wave;
> Gray bats that dodge and flitter;
> Black crickets hid that rave;
> And me whose life is bitter,
> And one white head-stoned grave.

Perhaps the most pleasing of the shorter pieces, here given in full, is "Distance":

> I dreamed last night once more I stood
> Knee-deep in purple clover leas;
> Your old home glimmered thro' its wood
> Of dark and melancholy trees,
> Where ev'ry sudden summer breeze
> That wantoned o'er the solitude
> The water's melody pursued,
> And sleepy hummings of the bees.

And ankle-deep in violet blooms
  Methought I saw you standing there,
A lawny light among the glooms,
  A crown of sunlight on your hair;
  Wild songsters singing every where
Made lightning with their glossy plumes;
About you clung the wild perfumes
  And swooned along the shining air.

And then you called me, and my ears
  Grew flattered with the music, led
In fancy back to sweeter years,
  Far sweeter years that now are dead;
  And at your summons fast I sped,
Buoyant as one a goal who nears.
Ah! lost, dead love! I woke in tears;
  For as I neared you farther fled!

Of his love poetry, "In the Gardens of Falerina" is good, although an imitation. In the description of the garden the poet says:

  The bee dreams in the cherry bloom
  That sways above the berry bloom;
The katydid grates where she's hid
  In leafy deeps of dreary gloom:
The forming dew is globing on the grasses,
Like rich spilled gems of some dark queen that passes.

And then concludes with the following invocation to her for whom said scene was evidently inscribed:

  Bow all thy beauty to me, love,
  Lips, eyes, and hair to woo me, love,
As bows and blows some satin rose
  Snow-soft and tame, that knew thee, love,
Unto the common grass, that worshiping cowers,
Dowering its love with all her musk of flowers.

In blank verse is "The Punishment of Loke," the most pretentious piece in the volume. The giant Thor is thus described as he joins the undertaking:

  Then great-limbed Thor sprang wind-like forth:—
Red was his beard forked with the livid light,
That clings among the tempest's locks of bale,
Or fillets her tumultuous temples black,

And drops with wild confusion on the hills;
And thro' his beard, like to the storm's strong voice,
His sullen words were strained, and when he spake
The oldest forest bowed their crowns of leaves,
And barmy skulls of mead half-raised were stayed
Within Valhalla, and heroes great were dumb.

1888, August 26, *Courier-Journal*, EDITORIAL: SOME RECENT POETRY:

William Dean Howells has in *Harper's Magazine* for September an article on recent poetry devoted chiefly to Madison J. Cawein and Robert Burns Wilson. Mr. Howells is liberal in his quotations from Mr. Cawein's new volume, *Blooms of the Berry*, and gives entire Mr. Wilson's poem, "In September," from *Life and Love.*

The writer has been most fortunate in his selections from Mr. Wilson, but less so, we think, in what he has chosen from Mr. Cawein. But a critic sees what he likes, and Mr. Howells wants little of the flesh and blood in his poetry, or prose either. The last two stanzas of "In September" give to it a meaning, a suggestion, something beyond a picture, and so the reader takes a profound interest in it.

In Mr. Cawein's verse imagination runs riot; his language is rich, bold, free—at times his images are redundant, but the impression is always vivid. Poetry, to satisfy the senses, must have in it the personal element. One finds it to some extent in Mr. Wilson's verse; not prominent, not obtrusive, but present by hint or suggestion throughout, though in the main his is "the harvest of the quiet eye."

Mr. Howells' praise of and quotation from Mr. Cawein may lead the reader to suppose that his work lacks dramatic force, that it wants the human element, and that Mr. Howells' praise is due to this. On the contrary, Mr. Cawein's poetry lacks only, or chiefly, self-restraint. A little more care in composition; a little more pains to make the reading easy; a little more appreciation of the value of silence; a recognition of the fact that the world is not always entitled to our thoughts hot from the furnace—these, with a severer judgment of his own work, will give Mr. Cawein an eminent place in poetry.

Mr. Cawein's style is his own. Notwithstanding Mr. Howells' disappointment at not finding any evidence of Tennyson's influence in his work, we hold it to be apparent. In subject, in treatment, in language, Tennyson's influence can be traced, but only for good. There is no slavish imitation, no mere echoing of any subject, but familiarity of Tennyson and Swinburne is easily seen. Now if Mr. Cawein will choose as his master in the workshop, not Swinburne but Tennyson, we will have fewer poems, but better, and later when new editions are called for there will be less reason for his sober judgment omitting or regretting some of his indiscretions of youth.

One of the most noticeable poems of Mr. Cawein appeared in *The Courier-Journal* a few weeks ago [July 22, 1888], and was entitled, "The Mood O' the Earth." Here are some of the stanzas:

My heart, my heart is high, my sweet,
And the sense of summer is full;
A sense of summer,—full fields of wheat,
Full forests and waters cool.

To live high up a life of mist
With the white things in white skies,
With their limbs of pearl and of amethyst,
Who laugh blue humorous eyes!

Or to creep and to suck like an elfin thing
To the aching heart of a rose;
In the harebell's ear to cling and swing
And whisper what no one knows!

To live on wild honey as fresh as thin
As the rain that's left in a flower,
And roll forth golden from feet to chin
In the god-flower's Danae shower!

Or free, full-throated curve back the throat
With a vigorous look at the blue,
And sing right staunch with a lusty note
Like the hawk hurled where he flew!

God's life! the blood of the Earth is mine!
And the mood of the Earth I'll take,
And brim my soul with her wonderful wine,
And sing till my heart doth break!

We find in his new volume few things better than this, but in this one sees the need of revision and labor.

1889, January 27, *Louisville Commercial:* A Poet's Life—Sketch of the early history and the present surroundings of Madison J. Cawein. A young man just making acquaintance with Fame and to whom Fortune is yet a stranger. The unfavorable conditions under which he has hitherto labored. His forthcoming work.

Madison J. Cawein was born in Louisville on March 23, 1865. Though no records exist that any wizard, learned in the quaint, starry science of the olden time, cast his horoscope it is safe to say

that at his birth good planets were in conjunction shooting earthward sweet influence and happy benedictions. For four dark, murderous years of civil war were drawing to a close, and the troubled heavens had already kindled with the dawn of a deep and prosperous peace.

His family was originally French. It may be traced backward to a fountain-head of noble blood. Jean de Herancour was its founder. He was a Huguenot nobleman who flourished during the reign of Louis XIV. Little is known of him except that he owned a strong chateau and large estates in the Champagne country to the east of Paris and was able to muster at his pleasure a goodly force of vassals and retainers. The arms of this nobleman were three black mallets on a field argent. What significance attached to this device is not known.

The poet has in his possession a family tree traced out on an antiquated scroll of yellow parchment, which is stamped with these armorial bearings of the family.

For more than a hundred years before the time of De Herancour the Huguenots had been a sect in France. Humble followers of the religious tenets of John Calvin, at first barely enough in point of numbers to form a congregation for divine worship, they became a powerful and dangerous political party, which threatened division in the kingdom. They clung to their faith with martyr-like devotion through fair and evil fortune. They were flouted, branded as outcasts, hunted and shot down like beasts of the forest. Through all the dark period of their dire persecution their sublime courage and heroic patience shine out in the history of those stormy times like the morning star glimpsed through the rack of the tempest. As a sect and a party they lived through the butchery of St. Bartholomew and survived the plots of the wily Richelieu. Proof against massacre and designing statecraft, they fell at last, prey to a woman. When the Grand Monarque rounded into the autumn of his days, he bethought him to make some atonement for a past that had been given up almost wholly to voluptuous vice. Drawn away from the path of wisdom by the trains of his mistress, he resolved, at her instigation, to banish the heretical Huguenots forever from his realm. In 1685 Louis adroitly made his peace with God and de Maintenon by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This foolish coup of senile royalty exiled thousands and tens of thousands of Huguenots from France. The De Herancours were in the consequent exodus that poured the best laborers and the best blood of the kingdom pell-mell across its borders. They settled in the German provinces along the Rhine. The descendants of the old stock are to be found there to this day. The blood was gradually transmitted by a subtle natural chemistry from French to Teutonic as the successive generations inter-married with the German people. Dr. William Cawein, the father of the poet, now a venerable gentle-

man but still a practicing physician of the West End, came of this transplanted stock and emigrated to this country from the Rhine provinces.

Cawein, as a school boy, passed through all the grades of the ward schools. He entered the Male High School in 1881, and graduated from that institution in 1886. In all the departments of his studies he was a good scholar. In certain of his classes he was a fair scholar from a sense of duty and diligent application; in others he was a famous one from a love of the subject. He hated mathematics with poetic heartiness; natural science, with all its glamour of pleasing experiment and scholarly speculation, he passed by as only tolerable. Latin he delighted in. He followed with unflagging and enthusiastic interest the wanderings and adventures of the "pious Æneas." The rest of his classmates took that redoubtable and classic hero to hell in the sixth book and left him there; nor would they have hauled him back to earth and sunlight again for a month of holidays. But Cawein, more kind-hearted and more indefatigable than the rest, waded on alone through Virgil's tough but sonorous hexameters till he saw the happy period put to the toils and tribulations of the great Trojan. Horace's Odes, with their classical beauty of expression and their largess of sensuous thought, were even more to his liking. Above all his studies, however, he loved English literature.

In his early youth he was an insatiable devourer of novels, and with the reading of the standard authors he mingled a great deal of trashy, flashy fiction. Up to his eighteenth year he had scarcely read a good English poem, and had never even dreamed of inditing one. In his Sophomore year his class took up as a text-book a work styled *Longer English Poems*, and in studying the excellent selections of this little volume he first gained a conception of the variety and richness of English poetry, and the fine delight there is to be got from it. From the first nipple-draft of Castalian waters his swaddling genius grew apace.

All of a sudden the passion of song came to him. He began to read and write poetry with the same savageness and voluptuous fury which thrills the veins of a tiger whelp, which weaned from its dam's milk has for the first time tasted blood. He wrote his first verses in imitation of Milton's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso. Afterward, keeping pace with his class in the progress of its studies, he imitated Dryden, Goldsmith, Keats, and others. He scribbled incessantly. Within a few months after his initial dash into the realms of Poesy he had a bureau drawer, at home, stuffed full of rhymes as proof of his poetical prowess. There were odes, elegies, lays, lyrics, and in fact every sort of poem known—all in manuscript, and, happily, destined to remain so. In after years, the poet offered these firstlings of his genius as a hecatomb on the altar of the Muses and toasted his feet by their sacrificial blaze.

Soon after Cawein began to scribble in verse, the disastrous fact became bruited about gradually among his classmates. It hurt his reputation. He was looked on ever afterward with suspicion. A moon-struck bard was an anomaly among the rollicking blades of the school. It was his wont to make short sallies into the country every week or so, on Saturday holidays, and of a Sunday, to drink inspiration from the landscape and life of the country. These solitary poetic ramblings furnished his companions infinite amusement. He was wont, in pleasant weather, to spend whole days in wandering alone through the fields and woods. His heart, in these happy early years, was like a full-toned harp. Every sight or sound of beauty struck a chord of music from it. He could sit for hours in luxurious contentment in the shade of some pasture oak, when the sun was pouring its trembling flood of ethereal gold over the meadows, and the bees, those summer revelers, were tippling nectar among the clover blossoms. But his observations of nature were not confined to pleasant seasons. He might be found at his lonely studies in the country when incendiary autumn had fired the forests with its blazing colors, and when winter had desolated all the landscape. From his rural ramblings he learned a philosophy of nature. It was not a new or original philosophy, but an old philosophy to which his soul fitted itself naturally. It shows itself in all his later writings. He does not look upon the universe as Wordsworth did, filling it with a spirit of thought and sympathy; nor as Shelley did, with a pervading spirit of love. He thinks of it as Keats thought of it, as a thing of living beauty. He loves it for its loveliness. The delight he takes in its contemplation is a delight germane to that the art connoisseur has in a striking canvas or a fine marble.

During his school-boy days Cawein was lord of one splendid and favorite air-castle. It was his idea, when school-books should be put aside, to possess himself of some rural retreat, and there, in pleasant solitude, live the life and dream the dreams of a poet. It was his purpose to let pass the material things of this world, and to devote the energies of his nature to the writing of verse. His ideal of life in those days was such a life as Wordsworth lived at Grasmere. He wished to pass his days in sweet and constant communion with nature, with a good library to his hand and a coterie of friends who should be of congenial spirit to his own. But alas for the rosy dreams of youth! A poet's schemes like the schemes of ordinary men and mice "gang aft agley." When he left school he started indeed to devote himself wholly to literature. He wrote one story in prose which was published in *The Chicago Current* and brought him $25. ["Paul Herancour's Sacrifice." *Current*, Chicago, Vol. 6, 1886, 959-60.] But he came finally to the conclusion that a young writer's pen, however brilliant, was a poor thing to depend upon for meat and bread. So he cast about for something else to do.

No other opening presenting itself, he secured a position through the influence of his brother, as assistant cashier in Waddill's Newmarket pool-rooms. He has held this position for the past two years.

In the unhealthy moral atmosphere of the gambling-house and amid the feverish bustle of its life, he has worked day in and day out. The crowds that constantly throng the establishment would furnish excellent material for a novelist to study; but where is the poet that ever sang, who could suck inspiration from such an olio of humanity? The house is daily swarmed, till its hours of closing, with gamblers, horsemen, plungers, jockeys, swashbucklers, flash gentlemen and sharpers. Its crowds are no worse and certainly no better than the crowds that frequent such places elsewhere. The house, in fact, is one of the finest of the kind in the South or West. Its proprietor, Mr. A. M. Waddill, is one of the wealthiest and most famous gamblers south of the Ohio. He is, withal, a typical gambler. He was born down in Alabama in '48, of a rich and aristocratic parentage. He had opportunities for a splendid education, but books with more than fifty-two pages in them had no charms for the wild youngster. He learned to gamble early in his youth, and made gambling his profession while yet in his teens. He did not gamble for that sport and tingling excitement whose siren pleasure draws most hot-blooded youths to the gambling table; passionless and shrewd and calculating, he gamed only for the silver it put into his pocket. In the palmy days of the South before the war, he won a small fortune as a gambler on the river. He located in Louisville after the war, and soon became the king of the gamblers here. There was scarcely a paying faro house in town in which he did not have an interest. He owned the controlling interest in the Crockford, which in the old days was one of the most famous gambling houses in the South. Around its tables the big players and wealthy men were wont nightly to try their fortunes, and thousands of dollars were won and lost at a single sitting.

In these autumnal days of his existence he lives in princely fashion in an elegant home on Chestnut Street, where he has surrounded himself with all the comforts of life. He is as true as steel to a friend; implacable and relentless to his enemies. Contrary from what one would expect from such a man, he is generous to a fault and princely in his charities. The words of the brave old Scottish toast might be applied to him as fittingly descriptive of his character: "A man who never turned his back on friend or foe."

Such is the house that our poet works in, and such a man is his employer. Surely a poet never breathed a more uncongenial air. But his surroundings have not tainted his nature. He himself never gambles. When he first went into the house he made several bets on Apollo and Pegasus. He thought they ought to win by virtue of their mythological names, but Apollo's classic legs wouldn't work

fast enough, and Pegasus had lost his wings. After several small losses he rested on the laurels he had won as a plunger and concluded to stick to poetry.

That Cawein has risen superior to the circumstances into which necessity has apparently placed him is proof of his genius. Sordid worldly and exciting pleasures have time and again proved silken jesses to hinder falcon spirits from their flight. But Cawein's airy fancies and dreams breathing of woods and fields and steeped in beauty have no bare suggestion of the poet's daily surroundings. Indeed, he has written some of his sweetest songs at his desk in the Newmarket.

Cawein's home is at the corner of Nineteenth and Market. It is a large, painted brick house. It sits in a yard of comfortable size, and is half embowered among trees and shrubs. It is probably the handsomest residence in that portion of the city. His home is very home-like. Its atmosphere is one of refinement and culture. It is furnished with a rare degree of good taste, which has happily failed to sacrifice comfort to elegance. The library is a well-selected and extensive one. It was formed largely by the poet, who from boyhood has exercised a principle which every one would do well to adopt—viz.: to buy every book that he reads. Cawein does all of his literary work in his bed-room in the rear of the second story. It is a snug little apartment. Its eastern window is high enough above the contiguous dwellings to take the dawn; its western window commands a prospect of suburban landscape which is not altogether unattractive with its background of smoky Indiana hills. On the walls are two unpretentious pictures. One is a picture of a pretty girl reclining, with a wealth of blonde hair streaming down in luminous masses over her shoulders. It is called "The Dreamer." The other is an engraved portrait of Amelie Rives, whose warm type of beauty the poet admires extravagantly. Cawein gets off from work at 9 o'clock at night. There would be little time left for literary effort if he cared to work. But he never writes at night. He fears, he says, that he might weave the somberness of the night into his verses. He works in the morning. He rises at 6:30 and is at his desk till 8. He is an indefatigable worker. When the creative ecstacy is on him, he can scarcely write fast enough to put on paper his crowding thoughts and fancies. Afterwards he criticizes his verses coldly, lops off unmercifully, changes a word here, elaborates an idea there, and keeps up this laborious polishing until the manuscript leaves his hands. At times he spends an hour upon a single line in endeavoring to turn it in the happiest way.

Cawein has published two books—*Blooms of the Berry* and *The Triumph of Music.* Both were published by John P. Morton & Company, of this city. Mr. William Dean Howells gave both productions the most flattering notices in *Harper's Monthly.* In the same number

in which he reviewed *The Triumph of Music*, he reviewed a collection of poems by Robert Burns Wilson. He drew no comparison between the two poets; he praised them both in unstinted measure; but he dwelt longer upon Cawein and, as it seemed, more relishingly and lovingly. One impartial would infer, he set the young singer above the older bard, who had already won his laurels. This might be laid to the critic's knightly generosity which with kind preference chose to give the greater meed of praise to the unrecognized genius who stood in the stronger need. It is probable, however, that no such motive actuated him. It is no unnatural deduction that he considers Cawein the greater and more promising poet of the two. Cawein has, indeed, more power than Wilson; his imagination is stronger, freer, wilder, richer; he is the mightier wizard with the English language, which yields unwonted music beneath his magic spells; he is greater in his mastership of metre; greater in his versatility. Wilson is a singer, whose best work is already done; Cawein is a poet, whose present is a dawn and earnest of yet greater things. The former's songs, while still sweet, are losing their freshness and variety. He still sings, but he sings to the old tunes. Cawein's music is always sweet and varied always. Wilson is a shepherd swain piping music from his oaten reed, that breathes of the beauty of pastoral landscapes and mingles with the music of summer brooks and singing birds. Cawein is a minstrel who plays upon a harp of many strings and twangs sweetly upon them all.

A few of the poems in Cawein's last book were severely censured for their broadness. In their warmth of passionate feeling they trenched upon the furthest borders of the poet's elastic license. This fact and the strictures which were passed upon them should have been enough, it would seem, to make the book take in these prurient days, when any production which is off color morally is snapped up eagerly by the public. But this case was an exception; the author lost money on both his publications.

He will publish another volume early in the coming month. His work is already in the hands of Houghton, Mifflin & Company, the celebrated publishing firm of Boston. [Should read John P. Morton & Company, of Louisville.] The proof sheets have already been sent to the author for correction. In this new book, *Accolon of Gaul*, the poet leaves song and makes trial in a new and more ambitious field. The principal poem of the collection is a metrical romance, sixteen hundred lines in length, which goes back for a subject to the witching and legendary days of the good King Arthur—those dim days of early chivalry whose charm still lives in the writings of Tennyson and Swinburne. This is a dangerous undertaking for so young a writer. Great geniuses have been at work amid the golden fertility of this delightful field; and he must indeed swing a golden sickle who gleans a sheaf there which will reward him for his labor.

As a man, Cawein's character is distinguished by simplicity, sympathy and glowing enthusiasm. He has read widely and talks entertainingly. He is withal a frank and generous companion. He is overflowing with spirits and has an abounding interest in everything around him. There is not a stain of dark melancholy, either real or feigned, in the weft of his nature. He is too full of health and interest and bright dreams to have room for hypochondria. If he ever shows a darker mood in his writings, his sadness is tender rather than bitter.

If the unborn day may be presaged from the signs of the dawn, Cawein's future will be bright as his own strong spirit, bright as his friends' hopes for his success. He has won already a modicum of fame; fortune will come later, and fuller fame with the fuller life into which the years are gradually ripening him.—*Walter N. Burns.*

1894, January 21, *Courier-Journal.* A Louisville Poet. A Southern singer better known abroad than among his own people. How Madison Cawein's worth was discovered by William Dean Howells. High School graduate of whom London literary papers speak with enthusiasm. Future histories of American poetry will contain the name of Anderson M. Waddill. A soaring ambition.

Some devoted scientist, the story goes, made a pilgrimage to the shrine of a great prophet of science. Who the pilgrim was matters not, but the great scientist was Charles Darwin. The pilgrim thought he would like to know how the country folk in that Kentish hamlet regarded the great man who made his home among them; so he asked a cottager. "Master Darwin, sir?" was the answer. "Aye, we all know him. Indeed, yes, sir, and we think a deal of him, too, sir. He's the kindest-hearted old gentleman in these parts, sir." A large part of a century devoted to observation, to the classification of innumerable facts, to intricate problems of induction, all tending to advance the greatest abstract discovery of the era, and Charles Darwin had earned for himself the reputation in his own home of "the kindest-hearted old gentleman in these parts." The story is recalled by the position in Louisville of Louisville's poet; not that there is any parallel as to aim, or age, or achievement between the cases of Madison Cawein and the prophet of evolution, but only that here is a man whom all the literary world knows as a poet, while Louisville only knows him as a young man who writes poetry.

The Market Street cars going west take you past rows of houses with all kinds of exteriors except the poetical kind, and at the corner of Nineteenth there is a swinging shingle with the inscription, "Dr. Cawein." The house distinguished by this sign is the home of the young poet. The man himself would never pass for a poet with any

one not accustomed to read physiognomies. Browning looked like a prosperous Englishman of business and beef; Cawein at first looks like any other Louisville young man, only a little older than he really is. He wears the conventional clothes and the conventional mustache. You must scrutinize his face before you will see in it anything out of common, and then it will strike you that the nose is large and sharp, and nose and eyes together have the look of quest. He seems to be seeking something eagerly. As for the languorous air of one who dreams luscious beauty, that may come when the dreams are in progress, but the general cast of his features is almost harsh. On the whole, speaking for myself, I would have said, after a conversation with Cawein, as with a stranger, that he was an uncommon man, with a strong character and a keen mind, but never that he was a poet. Look at his picture and see if you recognize the man of whom William Dean Howells wrote: "It is as if we had another Keats, or as if that fine, sensitive spirit had come again in a Kentuckian avatar, with all its tremulous hunger for beauty," or the author of these lines:

> Some frail lady white
> As if of water moonbeams, filmy dight
> Who waves diaphanous beauty on some cliff
> That drowsing purrs with moon-drenched pines.

Madison Cawein—and the name is properly pronounced "Kah-wine," with the accent on the second syllable, not "Kay-wine"—is another illustration of the American theory that the intermingling of different races results in intellectual vigor. His father's family is of that wonderful Huguenot stock that gave America the Bayards and England the Romillies, but on the mother's side he is of German descent. In 1886 he graduated at the Louisville Male High School, but had already taken to that pursuit of stringing verses which has been the ruin of many a good man. Nobody seems to have objected very strongly to this juvenile weakness, but nobody encouraged it. Not content with writing these verses, he wanted to see them in print, and ten or twelve years ago sent a short piece to *The Courier-Journal* for publication, and when Madison Cawein first saw himself in print it was in *The Courier-Journal's* type. What the name of this effusion was he has now entirely forgotten, but he says "it was the first of my verses I had ever seen in print, and I was very happy." [See *Courier-Journal* clipping, pages 101 and 102.]

He never thought of making a living by literature, but, without a murmur, walked into the first occupation that offered a prospect of providing him with bread and cheese. Future handbooks of English literature will have to record that this occupation was in the pool-room then kept by Messrs. Waddill & Burt, and thus shall those well-remembered "sports" attain a celebrity of which neither ever dreamed. As a curiosity of literature this employment in a gam-

bling-den of a man who was destined to become prominent in a new school of American poetry is as interesting as anything recorded by the elder Disraeli. New York has her stockbroker-poet to match the instance, but, apart from Edmund Clarence Stedman, Cawein probably stands alone as a man who has been in the thick of the degrading scramble and yet carried out of it still brightly burning the sacred torch to whose flame its atmosphere is generally poisonous. Not only this, but Cawein wrote poems while he was employed in that pool-room. Best of all, perhaps, it was his success in the pool-room that enabled him to deliberately say farewell to all mere money-getting pursuits and settle down to writing verse as his one and only serious employment.

Louisville can never claim the honor of having discovered Cawein; the information that she had a poet must needs be conveyed to her between the covers of *Harper's Magazine*. *Blooms of the Berry* was published in a limited edition by John P. Morton & Company in 1887. William Dean Howells was then doing "The Editor's Study" for *Harper's*, and Mildred Howells, his twelve-year-old daughter, was one day rummaging about in a heap of books that had been sent in for notice. Presently in came Miss Mildred, running to her father with a book she had found in the heap. "Papa," she exclaimed in great glee, "here's a poet." Howells knew his daughter Mildred for a precocious girl in all that appertained to literature, and gave his attention to her find. It was *Blooms of the Berry*, and it had the distinguished honor of an approving notice in the magazine for May, 1888. This, as the author says, "surprised the home people," as it well might, for many of the short poems in the volume had already appeared in *The Courier-Journal* without attracting any special attention.

Two years ago Cawein was Howells' guest at Lynn, Massachusetts. The young Louisvillian delights to talk of his Yankee discoverer. "Howells," he says, "is not at all the sort of man you would imagine him to be from his writings. He is a whole-souled, kind, genial man." This invitation was sent and accepted just after Howells' second notice of Cawein, the book this time being *Accolon of Gaul*, still its author's favorite and at that time the most ambitious work he had attempted.

Another memory which will always be a bright one for Madison Cawein is that of James Whitcomb Riley's early appreciation of his work. Whatever triumphs the future may hold for the Kentucky poet, he can never forget the flush of pride which came over him when his elder brother-singer published in *Green Fields and Running Brooks* that beautiful little lyric in his honor, "A Southern Singer," and again when he dedicated to him his *Flying Islands of the Night.*

But the time has come when the praise of other poets make but little difference to this man's position in the literary world. His fame has passed beyond the limits of his own country. His works are no

longer published by a Louisville firm, but simultaneously in London and New York by George Putnam Sons. His name recurs again and again in the review columns of metropolitan literary papers. The London *Spectator*, *Athenaeum* and *Speaker*, to say nothing of *The Times*, seemed to take it for granted that Madison Cawein is acknowledged in his own country as one of its very foremost verse-writers. If he can only keep up the supply, and keep it up to the standard he has already reached, his position in the world of letters is secure. The chances are that he will do much more than this.

One dark cloud, however, still hangs over the successful poet, and to dispel it is quite beyond his power. Long ago when he was at the High School, he made a sonnet and entitled it, "Our Wedlock." The editor of *Lippincott's Magazine* accepted the sonnet and paid for it, but the sonnet has never appeared. Cawein has written imploringly to the editor to send him back that early sonnet and take double the price originally paid for it, but the editor is obdurate. Some day the sword will drop: that crude piece of work, of which its author now thinks with horror, will appear over the same name which is printed on the title page of *Moods and Memories*, *Days and Dreams* and *Red Leaves and Roses*. This, and to attain his ideal of versification, appear to be his two great anxieties. The comparative indifference of his native city can not be said to weigh heavily on his soul. But for this he has only himself to thank; if he had taken the trouble to buy himself a loose cloak, like that in the picture of Tennyson, and to keep his hair long, people would have known that a poet was among them. As it is, he has only gone on, regardless of surroundings, pursuing the highest ambition of a mortal—the ambition to be divine and to make a beautiful thing.

1897, October 5, *Courier-Journal:* Henry Clay's Mother.

Mr Zachary F. Smith read [before the Filson Club, October 4] an admirable sketch of The Mother of Henry Clay. . . . This was followed by an original poem on Nicholas Tomlin's and Thomas Bell's ride during the siege of Bryan's Station, August, 1782. The poem was by Madison Cawein and was read with fine effect. He styled the poem a description of "How They Brought Aid to Bryan's Station." It was a great poem and one that should win the author a warm place in the hearts of patriotic Kentuckians. [Mr. Cawein became a member of the Filson Club in 1892. He was then one of the youngest men in the Club. He took part in many of the general discussions of Kentucky history that followed the reading of the paper scheduled for the meeting, and every year or two, read by request, one of his poems before the Club.]

As Recorded by the Louisville Press

1899, April 11, *Louisville Times:* QUEER CLUB FORMED IN LOUISVILLE. MEMBERS LIMITED TO THIRTEEN IN EACH CHAPTER. ONLY THOSE ELIGIBLE TO "THE BLEATERS" WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN TRULY LOVED.

A unique club, which has been in existence in this city for over two years, will shortly be regularly incorporated under the name of "The Bleaters." The membership of a single chapter is limited to thirteen, and the sole qualification necessary for the eligibility of an applicant, beyond that of being desirable to the other members, is that he must be able to take soul-scorching oaths to the effect that no woman has ever seriously cared for him. If after he becomes a member and it is discovered that he has falsified in regard to the matter, or if he becomes the object of serious affection on the part of any woman, he is ignominiously expelled.

The order originated with Dr. A. Harris Kelly, Henry Coolidge Semple and J. Wallace Vaughan, who, on comparing notes one day, found that each had been the victim of a woman's wiles. They adjourned to a neighboring wet goods emporium to tell their troubles, and during the course of the evening resolved to band themselves together and formulate certain resolutions for future guidance and retaliation upon the fair sex. A little later, George S. Lowe found himself in a predicament similar to that of the first three and craved admission. It was accorded, and so the order grew. So many applications for admission were received that it was decided to limit the membership to thirteen, chosen, of course, as being emblematic of the hard luck of the members.

The origin of the name "The Bleaters" is one of the secrets of the order and cannot be divulged to the profane. Some months ago a regular organization was effected, by-laws formulated and a ritual adopted. The club now has ten members, three having been expelled in disgrace for breaking over the restrictions. The following well-known young men are now members: Dr. A. Harris Kelly, J. Wallace Vaughan, Henry Coolidge Semple, Madison J. Cawein, Bert Finck, George S. Lowe, Dr. Harry S. Lee, James B. Brown, Allison Graves and T. Rodman Cartmell. Henry Coolidge Semple is the Hierarch. The following singularly appropriate names have been selected for the other officers: Cyclonic Windjammer, Dr. A. Harris Kelly; Melancholy Builder of Hard-Luck Poems, Madison J. Cawein; Exalted Handler of the Timid Grapes, J. Wallace Vaughan; Mild Excoriator of the Elusive Female, Dr. Harry S. Lee.

The badge of the club is as unique as the club itself and is held sacred from woman's touch on pains of immediate expulsion of the pin's owner. The club has no regular meeting nights, but convenes whenever rumors of a member about to fall from grace need to be investigated. Meetings are not very far apart. Sometimes during

the coming month a box party, followed by a dinner, will be given by the club. Each member will take the girl for whom he has striven hardest but cannot win. It is feared that the efforts of the young lady friends of the members to get invitations for this occasion may lead to numerous investigations of their disinterestedness.

1901, January 27, *Courier-Journal:* MADISON CAWEIN. INFINITE WORK, INFINITE PATIENCE. KENTUCKY'S POET SINGS OF THE LANDSCAPE, WOODS, FIELDS AND STREAMS ABOUT US. MAKES TRUE AND GOOD SONGS THAT BRING HIM LAURELS AND AN INCOME.

Of the few Louisville writers who are known to the world of letters, Madison Cawein, the poet, takes first rank in the minds of the critics. In fact, his work is of such quality that he is accorded three pages in Edmund Clarence Stedman's *American Anthology*, an honor which many an American poet much more popular in his time, is denied. In addition to this, Mr. William Dean Howells, whose critical faculty is not to be impugned, thus speaks of Mr. Cawein in "A Hundred Years of American Verse," an article in *The North American Review* for January:

"What Bryant did was to make American nature habitable to American imagination, and in this way he doubtless pioneered what may be called, for want of a better word, the bucolic school of the West, whose spirit is most, though it was not earliest, recognizable in the work of John James Piatt, and which has found, in the tender humanity of James Whitcomb Riley and the sensuous susceptibility of Madison Cawein, diverse ultimations alike oblivious of their source."

Mr. Madison Cawein belongs to Louisville as thoroughly as a man can. He was born in the city and has resided here save a few years of his early life. These were passed on a farm beyond Pewee Valley near the South Fork of Harrod's Creek, and later he lived on a farm back of New Albany. His present residence is in a pleasant brick home on the corner of Market and Nineteenth streets, a house where comfort reigns and in which could easily be written poems that indicate a mind at ease and a good digestion. Mr. Cawein is easily accessible and he makes an admirable host. His appearance does not at all suggest the poet. It is, in short, his conversation, when the light that comes into his face, that at once suggests what a theosophist would call "a dominant influence."

Mr. Cawein was asked whether his poetic tendency was an inheritance. He at once answered that he thought it was; that, although his grandmother never wrote a line, she was fond of improvising poems in German to her delightful old-world garden, a place in which she loved to stay; that his mother was a great student, not of fiction, but of philosophy and theosophy and that she is a theosophist now.

The impressions made by such environments on Mr. Cawein's mind have been very lasting and he also says that his poems invariably reflect some scenes connected with his childhood, the beautiful pastoral country about Harrod's Creek and the Southern Indiana knobs and valleys. Mr. Cawein's education began in a "little red schoolhouse" in Indiana and was finished in the city schools in Louisville. He graduated from the Male High School, now the Boys' High School, and since studied literature as a pleasure.

Until he entered the Male High School he had not read much poetry, but when he came in contact with it he read Milton and Walter Scott—"beloved of boys"—and at once began to imitate these poets. His first published poem appeared in *The Courier-Journal* while he was in the Sophomore class of the High School, and between seventeen and eighteen years of age. It was called "Heat Lightning On the Ohio." [See the republished clipping, page 102, from *The Courier-Journal* of July 12, 1885.] This was followed by other poems in the local papers which attracted attention and aided the young poet by the encouragement they gave him. While in the High School Mr. Cawein wrote a great deal, attempting epics and ballads. His study of Milton made him resolve ere he had read Tennyson, to throw the Arthurian legends into verse. He accomplished one, "Parsifal." It was written, however, after the metre of Scott's "Marmion." Before going on, Mr. Cawein read Tennyson and at once burnt all his efforts. After Tennyson he took up a study of Shelley, and this reduced him to despair. He compared his own work at eighteen with "Queen Mab" and it killed his ambition for a long time. In the meantime he studied Keats' poetry, but he resents any imputation that Keats' poetry influences him. He thinks that the poems of Shelley exercise a much more potent influence over him than those of Keats. If he has masters he declares them to be Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning.

Mr. Cawein is one of the few men who have had the determination to follow literature—and the worst paying branch of it—as a profession. He would not become a hack writer or achieve notoriety by newspaper verse. He wanted to be a poet and a poet he is. He says that at one time he held a clerical position and saved some money, which, by judicious investment, has made some more. In addition to this he has made poetry pay. His returns from his magazine verse for the year 1900 were about $100 per month. The magazines from which the checks came were the best in the country, representing *Harper's*, *The Century*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Lippincott*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *The Smart Set*, etc. While many writers, such as Munkittrick and several others, may make as much from verse in a year, their work is not poetry—and it is probable Mr. Cawein receives more in cold cash for his elegant and artistic verse than any other American poet of the present hour. He writes what he desires

to write. His Muse dictates to him and he follows her sweet will. He expressed an honest scorn for any other method of writing. The song comes out of the soul which Mr. Madison Cawein fills with nature's secret lore during long, long walks over the fields and down by the creek ways, across the knobs and through the valleys of Kentucky and Southern Indiana.

This is not the time or place in which to write a critical opinion of Mr. Cawein's verse. Better than that is a glimpse of the way he works and whence he draws the intricate knowledge of living, palpitant Nature, her smiles, tears, caprices, moods and secrets. There are many people who have passed Mr. Cawein in his quests, rambles, walks and never suspected that there went a singer whose heart was attuned to melodies unheard by others; whose eyes noted a thousand things others overlooked and in whose soul beauty dwelt and set its seal and glory on commonplace scenes. Mr. Cawein walks a great deal and there are few picturesque spots within twenty miles of Louisville that he does not know intimately and often. So that he is no house poet, but seeks his inspiration in the very scenes he so well paints.

How does a poet work? Mr. Cawein believes in the dictum that "genius is the capacity for taking infinite pains." He is a great stickler for form. No poem goes out from the red house to the post box that does not represent careful labor. Mr. Cawein rises at 6:30 o'clock each morning and reads some solid book for an hour or two. After breakfast he goes to his desk, in the privacy of his own room, and no one is allowed to disturb him. He writes slowly. Some lines are rewritten ten or twelve times. When a poem is finished he puts it away and lets it mellow. When he takes it out again he regards it with a cold and calculating eye and revises it. He then puts it aside for the second time. Every lovely lyric, seemingly so free, fresh and spontaneous, has had at least three rewritings before it goes out, carefully typewritten, to the publisher.

Mr. Cawein has issued, since 1887, including compilations, revised editions, etc., some fifteen volumes of verse. He has written some prose, but has never offered it for publication. His publishers for the first volumes of his poems were John P. Morton & Company, and while these volumes netted him nothing financially, they placed him before the public, and aided him to that high place he now occupies. To one of these volumes, indeed, his present success is due. One of them, "*Blooms of the Berry*," was, in 1888, sent to Mr. William Dean Howells, who then had the "Editor's Study" of *Harper's Magazine*. Mr. Howells has since told the story of how his daughter, Miss Mildred Howells, then a mere girl, was rummaging over the books sent in, and by chance dipped into Mr. Cawein's modest little volume. She ran to her father all in a glow, exclaiming, "Here's a poet, here's a poet!" Such an introduction won Mr. Howells' careful attention and a most

enthusiastic review. It was the first round in the ladder of fame, and Mr. Cawein has had at least a respectful consideration from critics ever since.

Mr. Cawein best loves his longer poems, "Intimations of the Beautiful" and the long dramatic effort, "Accolon of Gaul," the Arthurian legend that somehow escaped the eagle eye of Tennyson. He also professes a tender attachment for a little lyric in his new volume [*One Day and Another*] to be published at once by Richard Badger, of Boston. In making a choice for the *American Anthology*, Mr. Stedman has chosen of Mr. Cawein's poems, "To a Wind-Flower," "The Rain Crow," "Ku Klux," "Proem of Myth and Romance," "The Creek Road" and several others

Mr. Cawein's new book is to be "a lyrical eclogue," a love poem in five parts. It will be of peculiar form and composition, inasmuch as it will be composed of a number of lyrics, each complete in itself, but all having a connection. While no mention is made of Kentucky, it is a Kentucky poem; in fact, an idyl of Kentucky life. There are no titles to the lyrics, but stage directions at the top. It is a simple thing, Mr. Cawein says, but he considers it artistic.

Anyone who has a sympathy with literary work will find Mr. Cawein a delightful companion. He believes in it as a species of divine mission. About him in his library are photographs and books and souvenirs of literary friends and coworkers. There are many well-known faces and autograph volumes. Mr. Cawein looks at them affectionately and smiles:

"Yes, I have good friends everywhere," he says, "and some of them tell me I stand in my own light because I do not follow Thomas Nelson Page and John Fox, Junior, and James Lane Allen and go to New York. But I do not think I do. I am in my element here, where I know my Kentucky woods and fields and landscapes. I think I belong here, anyhow I am going to stay here. Let others go, but I am going to stay in Kentucky."—*Elizabeth Cherry Waltz.*

Summer Lightning O'er The Ohio

By Madison J. Cawein

(*Courier-Journal*, July 12, 1885)

[In the sketch quoted from *The Courier-Journal* of January 21, 1894, is a statement to the effect that Mr. Cawein had entirely forgotten the name of his first published poem. In the article dated January 27, 1901, the title is given as "Heat Lightning on the Ohio." "Summer Lightning O'er the Ohio" is the earliest Cawein poem found

in the old files of *The Courier-Journal.* He was twenty years old when this was published. It is probable that a few of his poems were printed in some other paper before this date.]

Now Night, in purple pall,
All dusty with white stars,
Thro' Heaven's moonlit hall
In pensive state her solemn march begins,
Within the Western summer sky,
Where turns yon lonely orb
Of flame, a splash of fire,
A crystal bud, its petals white expanding,
The atmosphere domed, bubble clouds thick spins
Of grotesque shapes, that form and die,
Moon-flooded with a pearly garb;
Or grow a stately mosque, with spire on spire,
In which aerial sylphs their worship make.

And there, within those halls of vapors form'd,
The dumb, white lightnings dance;
As if the soul of Day, with fair Night charm'd,
Sends forth swift glance on glance.
Thus seem the speechless lightnings in the night,
When Summer stamps the earth
With mellow winds, that bring the Spring's delight
Into a fruitful birth,
To pulse within the dark blue skies,
Where crystal mountain clouds arise
In solemn state, cathedral-Wise,
Beneath the dome of stars;
Thro' which the astral-belted Night
In Moon-wheel'd car swift takes her flight,
With swarthy wand and dark bedight,
And rules the dome of stars.

1903, February 7, *Louisville Times:* A Kentucky Man of Letters.

The personality of a poet is as interesting to the public as his songs. It wants to know something about him in private life—his looks, manners and habits. The poets of the good old times ran things wide open—everything went—to-day they wear straight jackets and walk on eggs.

In George D. Prentice's day poets flourished in Kentucky like rabbits in Australia, and the Legislature was called on to offer a

bounty for their scalps. The whole State was so congested with them that in Frankfort you couldn't throw a bootjack out of the window at a cat without hitting at least a hundred "sweet singers." That's the name they go by in the little town amid the hills. But Prentice died and the poets were treated like the old straw hat when the fall sets in and people begin to get cold feet. It was just prior to the death of Mr. Prentice that Colonel Will S. Hays asked him: "Mr. Prentice, how did you like my last poem?"

He said fervidly, "I thank God, Will, that it is your last."

Time again, however, in this brazen age of song I have been asked: "What of Madison Cawein? Tell us something of the man personally."

The sketches of him always tell where he was born and when he was born, but as to giving us any real notice of him, nixy. Now, be it understood, that I am his friend, and I am not going to tell anything mean on him. Sit still, Madison, I don't know anything mean. Even though a woman and having a friendship of years' standing I can swear I don't. Now!

Some years ago, poems by an unknown writer made an occasional appearance in *The Courier-Journal*, that nest for incubating poets. The folks who knew a good thing when they saw it began asking: "Who writes these songs?" They found he was a modest, gifted young poet, whose heart was in his work. He lived in a lovely home at Nineteenth and Market and was as unassuming as one could well be. Like others of the guild, he had to bear the slings and arrows of adverse fortune by some of these hidebound Philistines who knew as much about poetry as a hen does of a hawk's nest. One of this class approached him one day. "I say, Mad," he began, "my sister is going to celebrate her birthday soon. Write me some jingles" —ye gods, jingles!—"and I'll pay you in bananas." I have wondered since if Admetus paid Apollo in garden truck for herding his Shorthorns?

But Cawein, though he did not write the jingles, wrote on. His first book, *Blooms of the Berry*, appeared in 1887. The public yawned. It didn't sound like "Casey at the Bat." There was no tidings of "How Salvator Won" or "Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night," so it was tabled like a resolution.

But women are always discoverers. A perfect halo of petticoats hangs over Cawein's fame. The daughter of a big Eastern writer, who has immortalized the land of codfish and baked beans, unpacking some new books, came across *Blooms of the Berry*. "Oh, father," she cried, "only read this, it's lovely." He did read and then there came a big editorial on the book, which brought Mr. Cawein right down to the baldhead row of poets. The writer's daughter was to him what Isabella of Spain was to Columbus. Louisville woke up and chalked down the odds against him. Society sent cards and lion hunters got

their guns, but Cawein was unmoved by all this. Unlike Lot's wife his head was never turned and from that day on he has continued to reside in his old home among his old friends and new.

That same year he was the guest of Mr. Howells at Boston. One night, as he retired, he heard a knock at the door and saw an arm thrust in with a whisky bottle attachment. "No, thanks," said the poet, "I never drink whisky." He might as well have hurled a bomb outside. "Not—drink—whisky," gasped his host, "and from Kentucky!" Then the novelist came in the room and gazed long and anxiously on the face of the son of the "dark and bloody ground" who turned down his corn juice. This is authentic, and affidavits can be had about it.

Heart failure was also one of the things that threatened his native city when he went to a bank to buy stock. As he handed over the money some one in the bank remarked: "That's Madison Cawein, the poet." Nuff said. The receiving teller called for help. Who ever heard of a poet in the State having money enough for a haircut, much less to buy bank stock? Some gold brick transaction was feared and there was an active demand for nerve tonics at the nearest drug store.

Mr. Cawein is one of the few Southern poets who has been made much over in the East. As a rule, the Southern brother who goes on to the place from which only three wise men came (and that proved their wisdom) is asked to sit on the mourners' bench as a horrid example or go way back and sit down. Cawein shared a different fate, but he loathes the noise and glare of a big city. As he once said to me when he went to Chicago: "I got out in front of my hotel on the following morning, heard all the roar of the wild beasts of the mart, held my head in my hands and took the next train home."

What he loves is nature. He is her sweetheart, so to speak, for the old girl has had more than you could shake a stick at. She is one of those flower-faced coquettes who smiles on all alike and has a kiss on her lips for every fellow who comes down the boulevard. He has courted her in the woods where the wild flowers hold their annual convention of light and sweetness. He knows the Indiana knobs by heart, though the gang of sweethearts who go over there and pre-empt the ground has nearly driven him away. He has written of the old cemetery on Jefferson Street—of its dim walks, freckled with sun and shade, its moldering tombs and the memories of rose and rue, history and romance, all the pathetic tragedies of life and love its limits enshrine. He has immortalized the old farm home near Jeffersontown owned by his family [1891-1903] and there is an ancient haunted house in the Indiana green gloom of woods that has inspired some of his most charming poems.

His has been the friendship without envy of all the poets of the country. Ahem, some of the Eastern gentlemen are a little bit sour

at present because Mr. Edmund Gosse has said he never heard of them, but here in the South, Riley, Wilson, Rule, O'Malley, Stanton, Rice, Allen—all the lay-out, long on brains and short on cash—have laid a rose of love at his feet. He is just a kindly, lovable gentleman, unaffected by flattery, the same good friend as of old, loyal and true, but the cap stone is still lacking to his success. No racehorse has been named for him in Kentucky. Perhaps, it is as well—racehorses named for poets generally take to their beds and have to be sold to pull drays.—*Elvira S. Miller.*

1903, June 5, *Courier-Journal*: McKelvey-Cawein.

The marriage of Mr. Madison Cawein and Miss Gertrude Foster McKelvey took place at 7 o'clock yesterday morning at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, in St. James Court [adjoining Central Park]. The ceremony was performed by the Reverend Dr. Reverdy Estell. The wedding was an unusually impressive one. The church was softly lighted. There was no music and no attendants. Only the near relatives of Mr. Cawein and Miss McKelvey were present. The bride was dressed in a dark blue traveling dress, with a white silk blouse, and wore a black pattern hat with gold trimmings. The bride and groom left at 8.20 o'clock for Denver and Manitou Springs where the honeymoon will be spent. They made a brief stop in St. Louis last night where they were entertained at the Planter's Hotel by Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Lee Gibson. Mr. and Mrs. Cawein will return to Louisville in a month.

1908, November 14, *Courier-Journal:* The Louisville Literary Club.

[The Louisville Literary Club was founded September 3, 1908. At its first regular meeting Mr. Cawein was elected an honorary member. He attended many of the meetings, and frequently took part in the general discussion that followed the scheduled lecture on the reading of a prepared paper. He appeared on four set programs: November 9, 1908, "Modern Poetry;" November 27, 1911, "Nicholas Lenau's Life and Works;" February 24, 1913, "Some Kentucky Poems;" April 13, 1914, "Poets Symposium." Reports of the second and fourth programs are printed elsewhere in this chapter. The following pertains to his first appearance before the Louisville Literary Club]:

The Louisville Literary Club is a new organization in Louisville and one which has a reason for its existence. Its present limit of membership is 200. Men of all professions and ranks, as well as professed men of letters, are eligible. While its name is "Literary Club,"

its range of topics is by no means confined to literature, but may embrace anything that affects the welfare of the city of Louisville, of the State of Kentucky, or the country at large. This club is a sort of safety-valve where, without cut-and-dried programmes but under intelligent and orderly method, men may voice their opinions. It is not a board of trade; it is not a commercial club; it is not a political club, but it is an assemblage where any of the topics proper in such organizations would not be out of order. It may deal, too, with music and the arts, legal reforms, political movements, matters affecting general health and welfare. In fact, its scope might be stretched to cover as many things as the commerce clause of the United States Constitution. Such bodies as this exist in other cities and it has been found to be a mark of a thriving and vigorous community to have them when supported by a live interest so that free and public expression may be afforded to the citizens.

On last Monday evening, however, the meeting confined itself to a strictly literary programme, dealing with poetry. The president, Mr. Ed. J. McDermott, presided, and not only happily introduced the speakers of the evening, but showed himself in no small degree acquainted with the subject for discussion.

The first speaker was Mr. Madison Cawein, Kentucky poet and world poet. While the appearance of Mr. Cawein is familiar to his fellow-citizens of Louisville and to numerous acquaintances in New York and the East, some present notes concerning him may be of interest to those who do not know him among his contemporaries, as well as to those who, coming after us, shall also love poets. Mr. Cawein is of medium height or less with rather broad shoulders, though slender. He has a well-marked aquiline nose and prominent features. His not abundant hair is grayer than it should be at his years; his brows are well marked and his eyes are dark and full of a brilliant gentleness. He reads his own poems with an elocution not always perfect, yet in a more interesting way than anyone else could read them. His voice is sonorous and pleasing and full of expression. When he reads those delightful, droll poems for children, of which he is about to publish a book, one gets the very human, humorous father and elder brother of his own little boy. When he reads those poems that deal with the sublimated essence of beauty he seems to embody the ideal poet as he pours forth winged words that carry one far toward beauty's inaccessible home.

Prefacing his article by the very true observation that no one can hope to keep up with all the literature of the day, Mr. Cawein went into a short discussion of the comparative permanency of lyrics and poetic dramas, giving the palm decidedly to the former, although he noted the immediate and current revival in the poetical drama, so well exemplified in the work of Stephen Phillips and other modern writers. Mr. Cawein quite well sustained his proposition, but whether

it would meet with general agreement or not, it cannot be denied that his ideals were stated with clearness and force. His paper is well worth printing. He then read a few unpublished poems, dealing with not only outer nature, but with human subjects. He also read four or five poems for children, among others notably the one concerning the little girl who was too good, and one which contains the utterances of the little boy who wondered where he went when he went to sleep.

Judge Charles Seymour, having been called on by the president, made a short address, humorous and appreciative, sustaining by quotation and example Mr. Cawein's theory of the greater immortality of the short lyric over other forms of poetry. Professor Marcus Allmond, the well-known educator, also read with animation several short poems of his own, written with spirit and interest.

The next regular speaker upon the programme was Dr. Henry A. Cottell, the laborious, learned physician, who rests himself with music and poetry. He drew a parallel between the poets of the classic age of England and the poets who write in English in the present day. He selected the sonnet in order to illustrate his address and with an astonishing memory recited sonnets from the time of Sidney and Spencer, Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth, down to the present day, delivering his favorite sonnets with great feeling and dramatic force.

The meeting, which was an open meeting and well attended by both ladies and men, adjourned shortly after 10 o'clock, according to the rules of the club.

1910, October 2, *Louisville Herald:* MADISON CAWEIN, A POET AND A HUMAN MAN. HE WRITES CLASSIC POETRY BETTER THAN ALMOST ANYBODY ELSE. HE LOVES HIS HOME AND FAMILY. THE STOCK MARKET INTERESTS HIM—HE WORKS, TIRELESSLY AND SYSTEMATICALLY, GETTING HIS INSPIRATIONS FROM FIELD AND FLOWER—KENTUCKY'S FOREMOST NATURE PAINTER.

"A man's a man for a' that," said Burns, but somehow the poet has always been out of count. Poets are so unmistakably different! Men? Perhaps. The mere word suggests antics, disheveled hair, wild eyes and collarless throats! Those who are born to interpret the stars and the writing on the wall—who are bound, if they are to sustain the title, to starve, suffer, yearn, seek and toil up the mountain of truth all the days of their lives—small wonder that they form a class apart and that ordinary men are distrustful of them.

In Louisville there is a poet today. Beware! In spite of his collar, his tranquil eye—in spite of the conventions he observes and the garnishings of civilization he wears—he is a poet. Even at this

late day there is a man about who prefers the woods to an automobile and a fire-fly to an electrolier! Collar or no collar, he must be a poet!

Madison Cawein, the nature-poet of Kentucky, whose new book, *The Shadow Garden*, has recently created a stir in the world of literature, has never considered himself as a man apart. He is easy to approach, and quite ready to talk of poetry, to explain how he writes it, to discuss it as a man of skill might discuss his profession. This is unusual for a poet. They have all been more or less "stand-offish" about bringing the Divine Fire into the light of day. Not so Mr. Cawein; to hear him talk is to realize that poetry, like everything else, depends on system, industry and a clear head.

"Every morning at half-past six," he says, "I begin work. There is something in the freshness of the air and the bright sunlight that makes work easy then."

"But you can't write poetry every morning, can you?"

Mr. Cawein smiled indulgently. "Why, no! I shouldn't try it; it depends. Now, this morning, I am translating Lenau."

Mr. Cawein rose, went over to the typewriter and rolled off a sheet. "I've always been partial to translation—and it's the best possible exercise for a poet. To be able to interpret the mood of a poem in another language, to catch the very breath and color of the words—I regard it quite as much a work of art as an original poem."

The following is a sample of Mr. Cawein's translation; the exquisite little poem of Lenau has been, as it were, breathed upon and intensified:

SOMBRE

A gloomy thought, a dream of dread and doubt,
One sombre cloud the face of Heaven crosses;
Within the wind the bush is whirled about
As on his couch the sick-in-spirit tosses.

Then Heaven mutters low one word of thunder,
Her moody lashes winking rainy grey,
As wink dark eyes when teardrops gather under,
And from the storm's wild eyelids darts one ray.

Now o'er the moor creeps up a chilly shower,
And stealthy mists steal down the forestland;
Dark Heaven, lost in grief, like some sad flower,
Lets fall the red sun wearily from her hand.

The remaining portion of Mr. Cawein's day is also systematically mapped out. Immediately after breakfast, he returns to the library,

where he corrects proof, or copies poems on the typewriter for an hour. Mr. Cawein, like all modern men of letters, has realized the necessity of doing typewriting "at home." At sharp half-past nine, after a brief romp with Preston, the boy of the house, Mr. Cawein walks to town to have a look at the "market." There are people, of course, who will wonder why a poet should be interested in stocks and bonds.

Bulls and bears, fluctuations in cola, copper or wheat, what have they to do with cobwebs and moonshine? Possibly nothing, and yet modern writers like modern people of all professions have realized that an adjustment to life is somehow necessary and that even an artist may work better if he has plenty to eat. So, Mr. Cawein watches the "bobbing up and down of the stocks" with a lively interest.

"A poet has to make a living, too," says Mr. Cawein, "and, of course in these days, poetry hardly does it alone. I know a doctor who finding his son writing poetry one day tore up the sonnet on the spot, with the admonition: 'Idiot, don't ever let me catch you writing this stuff again—do you want to end in the poor-house?' You see, that father had an understanding of the roads that lead to prosperity. As a matter of fact, the explanation is simple enough. People—that is, the broad majority—people that walk on the streets and go to the picture shows, are not interested in poetry. Too many easy things are at hand, too many distractions and diversions. You see, poetry is not a diversion—and it is not easy. You cannot substitute 'Paradise Lost' for an automobile ride, nor 'The Ring and the Book' for a vaudeville performance. They want 'something doing.' In the competition between the flying machine and pentameter verse, I'm afraid the victory for the machine would be overwhelming."

After an hour or so spent at the Exchange, Mr. Cawein goes over to the Pendennis Club, answers his letters, reads magazines and papers, chats with his friends on politics and interesting questions of the hour. In the afternoon, however, he does his real work. This is his favorite time of the day for composition. To a lover of nature no hours are more inspiring than the drowsy ones of the afternoon, and in summer Mr. Cawein invariably spends them in the woods. This is perhaps not due to inclination alone; like all students of his subject, he has realized that one must live with nature to know her.

"So every afternoon I go out to the 'Haunts of Pan,'" says Mr. Cawein. "I call my favorite bit of woodland by this name, although it is only a stretch of wonderful forest on Kenwood Hill a few miles south of the city. But the moment I enter it, it is so deep and green and still, I could believe that all the satyrs and sprites in the world were alive and hiding about in the trees and shrubbery."

On being asked if he really wrote poetry in the woods, Mr. Cawein took out a note book of miniature proportions, and turning pages full of indistinguishable hieroglyphics, paused at one on which the title "To a Dragon Fly" could be made out.

"Yes," he went on. "It is easier for me to write in the woods; somehow it all comes to me. When you are indoors it is different. I have always worked in the open air from the time I was a young boy."

Mr. Cawein is fond of telling an amusing incident that happened one day, when he was writing in the "Haunts of Pan." "It had been a sultry afternoon," he said, "and the West had been looking so gloomy, that it gave me the idea of writing a poem to the storm. I decided on my metre and started to work. I was just in the right mood, and in a short while had several stanzas done. Suddenly I felt someone touch me on the shoulder. Now, all the while I had been working in this spot no one had found me out—so I was a bit startled. I turned about and there was the park guard, looking mightily concerned.

" 'Why, mister,' he said, 'I seen you come up, and I was a-waitin' for you to come down. Can't yer see there's a hard storm comin'—you'd a better be gettin' down, stid a-waitin' here to be struck by lightning.'

"I told him I wasn't at all afraid of the storm, but he would stand there talking until finally I had to go away. And I've never been able to finish the poem," concluded Mr. Cawein. "That guard snuffed it right out, the mood would not come back."

It has always been a matter of interest to the laity to know just how poets, painters and sculptors do their work, and what methods they employ. As a rule each man has a different way, characteristic of him and nobody else. Some writers, as, for instance, Byron, must toss things off at a white heat, others, like Hawthorne, are unmercifully slow. Again, a poet will be found who must finish a poem at one sitting, or else lose the thread of it forever.

Mr. Cawein does not belong to this latter class. Although the peculiarity of writing his poetry in the woods is decidedly characteristic, still he can work on a poem for a long time and in many different places. In fact all of his poems have been polished and rewritten in his own study. The sketch—the rhythm and idea are all thrashed out in the forest, but the slow polishing, and careful changing of phrases, is a process that goes on for many weeks after the poem has been struck off.

Mr. Cawein has a lively appreciation of anecdotes, and will occasionally tell stories of his debut into literature, which are full of humor and charm. There never has been, since the world began, a writer of note who has achieved success at once, and Mr. Cawein was no exception to the rule. Although *Lippincott's Magazine* accepted a sonnet of his on "Wedlock," while he was still a boy in the High School, subsequent efforts were frequently rejected.

"It is impossible for a young writer to get into the magazines until he has obtained some kind of notice," says Mr. Cawein.

"I had no success whatever until I brought out my first volume of poems in 1887. This was entitled *The Blooms of the Berry*, and it was fortunate enough to attract the favorable criticism of William Dean Howells. In a review of it published in *Harper's* he called attention to several lines and ideas that pleased him greatly. So then I had an entry into *Harper's* after which other magazines accepted my poems also."

When he was asked if these early poems were still to be had, Mr. Cawein seemed much amused.

"No, indeed," he said, "I bought up every copy I could find and burned it. Package after package I brought home from the book company, and fed with relish to the flames. We kept the house warm for a month on poetry." [The publishers, however, laid aside a number of copies.]

If it is an unusual thing for a poet to be honored in his own land, it is even more unusual for him to be respected in his own family. Poets are apt to be black sheep, until some good hundred years after they are dead. Once again Mr. Cawein is unusually blessed. In honor of Mrs. Cawein, whose beauty is well known and whose ardent cultivation of the muses has won her many literary friends, he has written some of his loveliest poems, while the boy, Preston, now six years old, has been the occasion of the whole series of delightful fairy tales published in *The Giant and the Star*.

"At first," said Mr. Cawein, "I had no intention of writing these down. But Preston pestered me so for stories,—'make-up-stories, father,'—that I had to invent a whole cycle. One day I was speaking about it to Dr. Henry Van Dyke, who said he had the same experience with his daughter. We exchanged part of these fairy tale series, and he advised me to write mine down.

"I began the work in prose, just as I tell them to Preston, but finally I had such a desire to put them into verse that I did so. Now Preston has ideas of his own about stories. He is one of the severest critics I have. He knows at once if a story is worth anything. So, as the fairy tales were finished I submitted them to him. If he failed to be interested in a story, I would leave it out."

The Giant and the Star, as it stands today, is a book for all children, because it has been proven and tested by a real child. Preston's attitude to the book, when it was finally printed, was unique. He declared that it was his book, and that Mr. Ralph T. Hale, of Small, Maynard & Company (the publisher), was not to give them to boys he did not know. But finally, after distributing some twenty copies among his friends, Preston consented to let Mr. Hale offer the others for sale.

The house of Mr. Cawein, in St. James Court, is in many respects characteristic of the poet, and the library, the sanctum sanctorum, with its well-chosen books, good paintings and comfortable "lived-in"

atmosphere, is a delightful place to spend a morning. Mr. Cawein himself is a great reader, and the books that surround him speak the man of cultivated, literary tastes.

"But I am reading a book now that has been getting me stirred up regularly twice a day," said he. "In the very title the author, Hudson Maxim, writes himself down seven times a fool. Now, listen to this, 'The Science of Poetry.' Just what is the world coming to, I wonder? It isn't possible to speak of the science of poetry. But do you know what this man claims? He says that any person of fairly good intellect, who has the patience and desire, can write poetry that will equal Milton's or Shakespeare's. Well, it isn't worth getting excited about. Poets cannot be made," Mr. Cawein said, "they must be born, and the man who talks about the science of poetry as if he were talking of an engine or a gun, is utterly ridiculous."

Perhaps in the city of Louisville today, there is no man of letters who has achieved wider fame than Madison Cawein. Only recently he has been made an Oversea's Member of the Authors' Club of London, an organization including the most famous authors of today. Thomas Hardy is now the President, having succeeded the late George Meredith. Mr. Cawein is also a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters in New York, an organization similar to the London one, but with headquarters in America.

People of the most varying individualities have taken an interest in his poems, and the most exacting critics of nature-poetry, including Theodore Roosevelt, have expressed their unreserved approbation of it. To quote Mr. Roosevelt's own words [from *The Outlook*, July 23, 1910]:

"Today there are many who delight in our birds, who know their songs, who keenly love all that belongs to out-of-door life. For instance, Madison Cawein and Ernest McGaffey, have for a number of years written of our woods and fields, of the birds and flowers, as only those can write, who join the love of nature, the gift of observation, and the gift of description."

In *The Thrush*, a London magazine devoted to poetry, the following is to be found:

"Mr. Madison Cawein's *New Poems* is far the most important in our group. His former volume, *Kentucky Poems*, shows that he seeks inspiration in his native land. He is undoubtedly a poet; there is grave fancy and a distinctive charm about his work, and often a serious depth of feeling, which is not passionate, but always calm and restrained. His subjects and metres are very varied; he is always a careful craftsman, with an ear for the music of words."

Mr. Cawein's new volume of plays, *The Shadow Garden*, is a rarely beautiful illustration of the spirit of modern poetry. Combined with the old and eternal virtues of truth, strength and sim-

plicity, there is a subtle, delicate atmosphere of other-world beauty, peculiarly characteristic of Kentucky's poet. The volume has met with such high praise that Mr. Cawein feels encouraged to continue his work in the dramatic field.—*Hortense Flexner.*

1911, November 28, *Louisville Herald:* MADISON CAWEIN THINKS NICHOLAUS LENAU RANKS NEXT TO HEINE AS POET—READS SOME OF HIS TRANSLATIONS IN LECTURE TO LITERARY CLUB.

Nicholaus Lenau, Germany's nature poet, ranks next to Heine in the opinion of Madison Cawein who made an address on Lenau's life and works before the Louisville Literary Club, at its regular meeting last night in the Assembly Room of the Louisville Free Public Library. Despite the rainy weather more than 150 members were present.

Mr. Cawein read more than twenty translations he had made of the poet's works and said that they contained more metre than those of any other German poets. Lenau was born in 1802 and died in 1850. Following Mr. Cawein, Judge Charles B. Seymour read a translation of one of Lenau's poems. Edward A. Jonas also participated in a discussion of his works.

1912, March 26, *Louisville Times:* POET IS HONORED BY MANY FRIENDS. ANNIVERSARY OF *Blooms of the Berry* BASIS OF TRIBUTE TO CAWEIN. LOVING CUP IS PRESENTED. OFFERINGS OF VERSE COME FROM ALL POINTS, AND HERE ALSO.

Vivisected, analyzed, rehabilitated, rejuvenated by hundreds of friends and admirers at an open meeting of the Louisville Literary Club, held at the assembly room of the Louisville Free Public Library, last evening, in honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of his first volume of poems and also of his forty-seventh birthday which was last Saturday, Madison Cawein enjoyed—if that is the term—an experience that seldom has been the lot of a maker of verses worth while, in his lifetime. The celebration was made the occasion for the gift to Mr. Cawein by the members of the Louisville Literary Club, and Mr. Cawein's friends, of a handsome silver loving cup suitably inscribed. The presentation was made by Horace C. Brannin, president of the Club.

After four hours of adulation, not unmixed with gentle fun-making at his expense, by his more intimate friends, it is not surprising that Mr. Cawein should have said, when there was no longer any opportunity for escape:

"I feel just like the little boy who, having done something for which he feared to be punished, tried to hide himself in the attic or

some place, but, being discovered, and unwillingly brought before all the company, instead of meeting with punishment was treated to ice cream and cake and presented with some wonderful toy. Speech is so inadequate to express all that one feels on an occasion of this sort that I can not attempt to put into words the gratitude which is due the Literary Club and all the participants in the symposium extended me this evening in honor of my work. Let me say, merely, that I am simply overwhelmed by your consideration and the praise bestowed upon my poetry, and by this beautiful gift, which, as it were, crowns the event. All that I hope for is that in the years to come I may never disappoint one of you and always write up to the standard of excellence which you have proclaimed for me. I thank you."

Dr. Henry A. Cottell presided as chairman last evening and many tributes from friends of Mr. Cawein among the distinguished writers of the day were read in addition to the numbers contributed by Louisville people. Interspersed with the verse, readings and appreciations were musical numbers—songs written by the poet and set to music by his wife or other musicians. In all, the programme comprised forty-two items and beginning at 7:45 o'clock did not end until nearly midnight.

"The religious element in Mr. Cawein's poetry" was the subject of the first offering by the Right Rev. Charles E. Woodcock, who said that Mr. Cawein has two elements which qualify him as a preacher; first, that "he need not be ashamed of his tools," and next, "the ornament of a meek and quiet mind." He said that no man can preach more inspiring sermons than are to be found in Mr. Cawein's verse.

"Rain," was read by former Governor Augustus E. Willson, as illustrative of Mr. Cawein's powers of description and as indicative of the spirit inspiring the work. Judge Charles B. Seymour read one Greek and one German poem with Mr. Cawein's translations to show his versatility and merit as a linguist. Albert S. Brandeis told how as a realist, Mr. Cawein takes the simple things of nature and makes them glow with inextinguishable beauty.

As expressive of "the divine discontent" characteristic of greatness, Lieutenant Govenor Edward J. McDermott read Mr. Cawein's "Ambition," and went on to say that Mr. Cawein is loved and honored as a citizen and patriot as well as a poet. Rabbi H. G. Enelow, speaking on the "Witchery of Poetry," said that it really is Mr. Cawein who "discovered Kentucky in revealing to blinder eyes her beauties of dawns and sunsets, her forests and her streams." Dr. Charles Ewell Craik read "A Prayer for Old Age," and declared that if all sermons breathed such spiritual beauty and inspiration there would be no need for a "Religion Forward Movement."

The Reverend Charles S. Gardner discussed the Grecian feeling for the beautiful as revealed in Mr. Cawein's poems, saying that it

was in no way inconsistent with his Christian consistency. Dr. W. Francis Irwin and Reverend Dr. Aquilla Webb told of personal associations with the poet and his human side. Mrs. Evelyn Snead Barnett, Judge George Du Relle and Professor Reuben Post Halleck also spoke. Professor Halleck held in his hand a little, red-bound volume from which, he said, Mr. Cawein, as a pupil in the Male High School, had his first larger glimpse of poesy.

William J. Dodd, humorously discussed "Praeterita," which, he said, he had read after being assured the title was not a lady's name. Cale Young Rice expressed his deep appreciation of the work of Mr. Cawein, saying that he had lived the poetic life for twenty-five years at a time of the world when it was most difficult. Other speakers were the Reverend Dr. Edgar Y. Mullins, Miss Margaret Steele Anderson and Dr. Fred L. Koontz. Musical numbers were contributed by Miss Sarah McConathy, Miss Josephine McGill and Miss Elsie Hedden.

Among the contributions of friends read by Secretary Charles A. Lehmann, of the Literary Club, were the following: James Whitcomb Riley, William Dean Howells, Robert E. Lee Gibson, Lucien V. Rule, Charles Hamilton Musgrove, Edward A. Jonas and Daniel E. O'Sullivan.

1912, March 27, *Louisville Herald*—Editorial: A Happy Occasion.

The splendid and spontaneous tribute paid to Madison Cawein by hundreds of his fellow-citizens Monday night was worthy of its object and a credit to those who participated in it.

In these days of politics and commercialism we are too prone to neglect those who minister to the mind and soul the things of beauty. We allow our singers and our artists to live among us unrecognized until their sudden passing leaves a sense of loss that awakens us to the sin and folly of our indifference.

That Louisville has voiced in some adequate measure its appreciation of one of its sons, whose name is known throughout the world as an interpreter of nature's manifold charm, is an occasion for thankfulness. It discloses to us the fact that we have the spirit and the disposition to set store by the finer things of life, and to honor those who, in the voice of poetry, speak to heart and imagination.

Madison Cawein has done much for Kentucky. He has given us a right to hold up our heads in the congregation of the elect. Where beauty is loved for beauty's sake; where the soul kindles at the thought of sunrise and bird-song, burgeoning trees and April-flooded brooks, where fancy wings its flight and revels in the dreamland of poesy, the name of Kentucky is loved and spoken softly for the sake of Cawein,

this child of magic vision who has opened so many eyes to the hidden joys, so many ears to the secret music of the wonder-world by which we are surrounded.

We are glad that Madison Cawein should know, now in the prime of his manhood, at the very acme of his strong, sweet singing, that Louisville loves and honors him. It is good for him to know it. It is good for us to have told him so.

1913, April 26, *Louisville Herald:* MANY SEE CAWEIN BUST UNVEILED. LIBRARY HALLS ARE CROWDED AS BUST OF KENTUCKY POET IS PRESENTED BY LOUISVILLE LITERATURE CLUB. WRITER'S WORK GIVEN HIGH PRAISE BY SPEAKERS. REVEREND E. L. POWELL, ACTING FOR MAYOR HEAD, RECEIVES GIFT FOR CITY.

The rotunda of the Louisville Free Public Library was transformed for an hour yesterday afternoon into a chapel, while the Louisville Literature Club presented a bronze bust of Madison Cawein to the Library and the people of Louisville. The hall was filled with the literary public of the city, and the stairways on either side of the rotunda, as well as the upper gallery, were crowded with appreciators of the Kentucky poet. At the base of the eastern stairway stood the veiled bust surrounded by spring flowers. A piano in front of the catalogue completed the transformation of the Library for the time. Work was suspended and the employes grouped themselves behind the central desk while the exercises were being held.

Miss Alice Bouche, vice president of the Literature Club, acting for Miss Florence Danforth, president, who is now in New York, was in charge of the program. Two poems by Madison Cawein were read by Miss Ethel Allen Murphy, after which John Peter Grant sang two of his lyrics which have been put to music. Mrs. John L. Woodbury made the speech of presentation.

"This is not the time nor place for a detailed appreciation of Mr. Cawein's work," said Mrs. Woodbury. "The people who are here today, as well as the Literature Club, are aware of the contribution Mr. Cawein has made to modern poetry. The appealing beauty of his work has won for him a place among the distinguished poets of this country and Europe.

"Nothing just like this we are doing here today has ever been done in Louisville, and I do not know that it has been done in any other city. The poets, as a rule, have gained scant praise while they were living. But we wish to honor our own prophet, and so prove the exception to the old proverb. We wish him to know how deeply we appreciate what he has brought to us, and to tell this to him—not say it about him.

"We have met with a great deal of helpful criticism, and some that has not been helpful, while we have been working together to make our dream come true. I have brought with me today some letters from the distinguished people who have been glad to co-operate with the Literature Club."

Mrs. Woodbury then read a number of letters from well-known American men of letters, praising the poetry of Madison Cawein. William Morton Payne, of *The Dial*, James Whitcomb Riley, Harrison S. Morris, Wilbur Dick Nesbit and many others testified to their high opinion of the Kentucky poet, and spoke in approbation of the Literature Club's project. A letter from the late Albert Brandeis, who was deeply interested in the plan, was also read.

The bust was then formally presented, and unveiled by Preston Cawein, son of the poet, and his small niece, Katherine Girdler. It is in bronze, the work of J. L. Roop, of Indianapolis, an interesting and striking piece of portraiture.

The Reverend E. L. Powell, acting for Mayor Head, received the bust. "It is embarrassing to accept this beautiful gift," said Dr. Powell, "the more so, since I am not prepared. The reason that the Mayor is not here to speak for himself is a simple one. Plain, unadulterated fright has kept him away. An extempore speech is not fit to express the gratitude of the Library for this gift of the Literature Club. I was thinking, as I listened here, of the eminent fitness of this setting. It is right that this man, who has come into the royalty in his beautiful ministry, should be crowned in this place. Rather the laurel for his brow than the epitaph for his tomb. The latter has usually been the reward of the poets.

"Could anything be sweeter than the approval of one's friends and neighbors for the work that is well done, for noble effort successfully made in spiritual things? Mr. Cawein is a poet because he could not help it. His work has won nation-wide—world-wide—fame for him. Truly, he is not a prophet without honor in his own country. I congratulate Mr. Cawein on having come into his kingdom here and now. We are living in a precedent-breaking age—and this precedent we break today is broken magnificently and gloriously.

"Why should we wait until a man has died to bestow the crown? Why should we withhold the reward until too late? I think there is no reason—and I am glad the Literature Club has taken this opportunity to do the beautiful and appropriate thing. The poet is the finest man in the world—we could not get along on this prosy, every-day earth without him. He is bound to be good—bound to see the white presences among the hills. We need him.

"And so, in behalf of the Public Library and the City of Louisville, whose mayor I represent, I accept with gratitude and deep appreciation, this bust of Madison Cawein, our neighbor, friend and fellow citizen—our greatest living poet of America, and perhaps of the world."

Following the exercises an informal reception in honor of Mr. Cawein was held while the bust was examined by those to whom it had been presented.

[The Louisville Literature Club was organized in October, 1882. Its membership is confined to women. It is an afternoon club, and a charter member of the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs.]

1913, April 26, *Courier-Journal:* MR. CAWEIN IN BRONZE.

Yesterday's unveiling of a bust of Madison Cawein in the Public Library of his native city was in many respects the most important event in the literary history of the city of his loyal affections. Of course, some may debate the point in favor of the fact of his birth in Louisville—an event at least happily preliminary to any justification for such a bust.

However, quibbles and quiddities aside, the bust is a praiseworthy tribute and one highly merited by a poet who while voyaging afar in realms of ideal beauty has been so fondly and faithfully aware of our Kentucky loveliness at his door.

Meanwhile as the bust now takes its place reminding those who enter that Louisville has produced this poet it has been pleased thus to honor, it should more remind younger and older readers of the other monument to Mr. Cawein within the Library. On the shelves his books stand—*aere perennius.* The bust revealing the outer semblance of the man, recalls the poet; the books are the poet, the man at his best; to them young Louisvillians and unknowing elders should be directed for further and genuine acquaintance with the poet whom the citizens yesterday so signally honored.

In making this recommendation one restriction may be ventured upon—not at all in the humorous vein. All millionaires should be energetically piloted away from the shelves whereon Mr. Cawein's books rest—they should be headed toward one of the local bookshops and persuaded to purchase a volume by their fellow-citizen.

(This is no subtle advertisement of Mr. Cawein, who fortunately needs no advertisement.) One remembers with pious horror seeing and hearing a local plutocrat step up to the Library desk and ask to take away a soiled, much-read volume of Mr. Cawein at a time when this poet's fame was sufficiently established to have made it perfectly safe for cautious Croesus to spend a dollar and a quarter for a nice, clean, personal and private copy of the *Vale of Tempe* or *Kentucky Poems*, or whatever it was.

On this special text much might be said. Perhaps it may be wiser to shift to a general exhortation or—if you will—excoriation. (Certainly no offense is directed at certain local and alien patrons of poetry and of Mr. Cawein's in particular.) Why, it may be asked,

will people expend hundreds and thousands of dollars on pictures, music and other worthy forms of art and be so penurious toward the modest, inexpensive, intimate art-poetry? Multitudes there are who feel disgraced if they do not punctually buy their two-dollar seats to concerts, to the drama, but who seem to have no compunction about evading the purchase of works of art in poetic form. They are, of course, not so decorative to a room—save indeed to the knowing eye. They make little concession to ostentation. For which reason all the more should they be purchased to furnish the inner chambers of the heart, the high mansions of the spirit. Gobelin, William Morris, or any other decorators offer furnishings so rich, so satisfying, inspiring and delighting as Cawein's poesy, which—well, *aere perennius!*

1914, April 14, *Louisville Herald:* INTEREST IN POETRY APPEARS INCREASING. SELECTIONS FROM VERSE OF LOUISVILLE WRITERS ARE READ. MADISON CAWEIN PRESIDES AT A POETS' SYMPOSIUM.

Evidence of an increasing interest in current poetry was seen at the Public Library last night when several hundred men and women of literary tastes gathered in the Assembly Room to hear readings from the verse of living poets of Louisville and Kentucky. The meeting, characterized as a Poets' Symposium, was held under the auspices of the Louisville Literary Club, which has long been striving to awaken public interest in meritorious current verse. Madison Cawein acted as chairman.

The program consisted largely of selections from the works of Louisville writers, read, in most cases, by the writers themselves. In addition, extracts were given by readers of the Club from the works of Kentucky poets now dead. The poets whose verses were read at the meeting are: Madison Cawein, Cale Young Rice, Charles Hamilton Musgrove, Young E. Allison, Edward A. Jonas, David Morton, Reverend U. G. Foote, Reverend Lucien V. Rule, Reverend T. M. Hawes, Lewis A. Walter, Herman Rave, Dr. Henry A. Cottell, Howard Miller, George Lee Burton, Omar W. Barber, E. S. Hopkins, Bert Finck, Judge William H. Field, Thomas Walsh, Augustus E. Willson and Ingram Crockett, and the late Robert Burns Wilson, Isaac T. Woodson, Will S. Hays, and Charles J. O'Malley. [During the course of the program Mr. Cawein read "The Derelict" by Young E. Allison, "A Little Further On" by Robert Burns Wilson," "Whatever Befalls" by Ingram Crockett, and "Worthiness" by Charles J. O'Malley and a few selections from *The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries.*]

[Madison Cawein died December 8, 1914. The details of his death are given in Chapter VI.]

IV

CAWEIN'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Mr. Cawein frequently stopped in the law office of his old friend William W. Thum, of Louisville. During one of his calls, in the fall of 1914, Mr. Thum suggested that the poet write a short autobiography, or at least prepare a few notes pertaining to his life and works. Mr. Cawein replied that he had neither the time nor inclination to write an autobiographical sketch, but would answer any questions asked. Mr. Thum then wrote a number of questions and presented them to the poet. Mr. Cawein took the questionnaire laughingly, and in the course of an hour or two wrote the answers and gave the document to Mr. Thum who preserved it. The poet, of course, presumed that his statements might serve some one as a basis for an article, but neither he, nor any one else, could have surmised that the original notes would some day be published. The questionnaire is here given in full:

Trace the race and nationality of your father and mother; also state when and where they were born.

My father, William Cawein, was born in the Rhine Palatinate, in a little German town on the Rhine, near Mannheim, about the year 1827. He was a descendant of Jean de Herancour, who was a Frenchman, coming from Paris, France, in 1685, a Huguenot, evicted as so many Huguenots were that year by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. My father came or rather emigrated, to this country and Louisville in the forties. He met and married my mother in Louisville. My mother, Christiana Cawein, was born in Louisville, the middle of the last century [1839]. Her maiden name was Stelsly. Her father and mother were from Germany. Her father [John G. Stelsly], had served under Napoleon Bonaparte in his later wars. Both my father and mother died in the early beginning of this century. [Dr. William Cawein died in 1901, and his wife in 1911.]

A Questionnaire

When and where were you born? State where you first lived, and so on, chronologically. What about your schools, teachers, mode of education, etc.? Give the names of your brothers and sisters—older—younger, etc.

I was born March 23, 1865, in Louisville, Kentucky, on Jefferson Street opposite the Court House. The house has long ago been torn down. My earliest recollections are of living on Broadway [between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, north side], in a cottage, where my father conducted a confectionery and bakery. We were very poor; mother did all her own work and made all our clothes. I was about six years old, I remember, when I was sent to school. The first school I ever attended was the Ninth and Magazine Street School. My father removed [in 1874] from Broadway near Thirteenth Street, to accept the management of a hotel, a country watering place, named Rock Springs, three miles from Pewee Valley [also three miles from Brownsboro], in Oldham County, Kentucky. There for the first time I came in contact with wild nature. Beautiful and majestic was the nature there, of rocks and trees and waters. The old water mill [Babbit's Mill] in the valley of Rock Springs [the valley of the South Fork of Harrods Creek], has played an important part in my poems of this locality, which I have celebrated in verse now for thirty years. From there we moved [in 1875] to Louisville again, to the [north-west] corner of Franklin and Buchanan streets; thence [in 1876] to a farm in the Indiana Knobs, on the Georgetown Road [Old Vincennes Road], back of New Albany, some two or three miles. I walked with my brothers and sister to the New Albany school every day, while school was in session, and back again—in snow and sun, heat and cold, for something like three years; that is, during our stay in Indiana. This was beginning in 1876. My recollections of our home in the Knobs are among my most vivid and pleasant; though poor, we were happy. It was there I began to read. Poe's "Raven" was one of the first poems I ever read. I recited it, at the age of about ten, at the district school [West Union School, now Jackson Street School]. I had three brothers, John D. Cawein, William C. Cawein and Charles L. Cawein, and two sisters, both dead, Lula R. and Lilian L. Cawein. [Lula was born in 1857 and died in infancy. Lilian died in 1912, aged forty-five years.]

When did you graduate? What books had you been reading, etc.? What did you do to make a living? How long employed at the pool-room? What next?

I graduated from the Male High School, Louisville, in June, 1886, at the age of twenty-one years. I had been reading everything under the sun I could lay my hands on. Books were few and high, and we were poor. I had managed to get hold of Spenser's "Fairie

Queene" and Sir Walter Scott's poems, and was wild about them. Professor Reuben Post Halleck was my teacher in Philosophy and Literature, and he encouraged me to write. Keats and Shelley and Tennyson then got me, and I haven't been able to break away from their influence yet, and hope never to do so. It is a good influence; along with that of Shakespeare's, it makes for great things.

In 1887 I went to work with my brother, John D. Cawein, in a pool-room on Third Street, between Market and Main streets. It was called The Newmarket. It was owned and conducted by Mr. A. M. Waddill and Mr. Joe T. Burt, both of them gamblers of the old type, affable, agreeable gentlemen, and proud of having a poet in their employ. I remained with them seven or eight years [1887—1892] and left them to engage in the writing of literature, which I have devoted myself to ever since. It was while there, an accountant and assistant cashier, that James Lane Allen, John Fox, Jr., and James Whitcomb Riley looked me up and made my acquaintance. I was "behind the bars," as it were, the brass bars of the cashier's desk, and they thought it a curious place to find a poet. It was. At the time Allen had written his "White Cowl," published in the *Century;* Fox had written a few brief stories of little significance, and Riley several books that had made him famous. I had just begun writing and publishing.

When did you become interested in poetry? Any special occurrence leading to it? How did it happen? When did you begin to write? Early influences in writing? What books have influenced you? What poetry have you read? What prose?

I became interested in poetry in my junior year at high school. We had been reading Hale's *Longer English Poems*, and I was fascinated by Keats and Shelley, and Goldsmith and Spenser. I commenced writing poems in imitation of others. Coleridge took hold of me also—like a terrible spirit. His "Ancient Mariner" and his "Christabel" haunted me, as also did Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound" and "Queen Mab." Then came Tennyson and Browning. I removed my furniture into their attics, as it were, and dwelt adoringly with them, but never forgetful of my earlier masters, Keats, Coleridge and Shelley. Byron was too noisy for me, too rhetorical. Then there were others I liked greatly. Not until later years did Wordsworth have any weight with me. I like him better now than I did Keats and Shelley in my youth, when I cared nothing for him, considering, at that time, his great poem "Intimations of Immortality" a bore, a great bore, not to be compared with "Adonais" of Shelley, or the "Ancient Mariner" of Coleridge, or "Eve of St. Agnes," or "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" of Keats. But now Wordsworth

brings me rest and quiet, and I love to sit in his company. He gives me peace; the others agitation and unease of soul, and longings that can never be satisfied.

What preference have you among novels? Poems? Plays?

Cervantes first of all. Don Quixote was my first love. I introduced myself to him when I was eleven years old. I have read this immortal book through at least four times. Thomas Hardy among modern novelists is my favorite. Between Cervantes and Hardy there is a host of others:—Bulwer Lytton, Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray; and before these, Smollet, Dickens and Fielding. Near to Hardy, a favorite of mine, is Meredith.

My favorite poem would be hard to enumerate. Here are a few: Keat's "Eve of St. Agnes;" "Endymion;" Shelley's "Sensitive Plant;" Tennyson's "Oenone," "Lotus Eaters," "Idylls of the King;" Browning's "In a Gondola," "Pippa Passes," "Count Gismond," "Child Roland to the Dark Tower Came" and countless lyrics of many other poets, ending with the "Fairie Queene" of Spenser, the last but not the least.

Among the plays: "Hamlet" and "Othello," "Tempest" and "Midsummer Night's Dream" by Shakespeare; "Faust" by Goethe; "Prometheus Unbound" by Shelley; Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird" and "Death of Tintageles;" Stephen Phillips' "Paola and Francesca," "Herod" and "Nero;" Percy Mackaye's "Canterbury Pilgrims."

What poets have you met? When, and under what circumstances?

I have met all the poets that are poets at present in the United States. In the nineties I met at his home, in Boston, through William Dean Howells, Oliver Wendell Holmes; a few days later, James Russell Lowell, at his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I have been the guest of James Whitcomb Riley frequently in Indianapolis; also of Richard Watson Gilder and Robert Underwood Johnson in New York City. Have hobnobbed with the younger generation for years, William Vaughan Moody, Frank Dempster Sherman, Clinton Scollard, to mention a few. In Boston I was the guest of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and of William Dean Howells. Joaquin Miller at one time [February, 1897], came through and stopped in Louisville to see me. It would take too long to enumerate all the writers who have been my guests.

What of people, your nature poetry; peace and war; great men you have met at home and abroad?

I am greatly interested in people, and always have been; but I get more credit for being interested in nature than in men and women,

because I have recognized the fact that I can interpret nature better than I can people. And yet, many of my poems are full of human nature; even the nature poems are full of human nature.

Peace. There never has been peace in the world. As long as we have kings and emperors and czars we are bound to have war. There is no escape from it. The world is working around to that end—the elimination of monarchies and the establishment of democracies, republics, all over the world. Then will be the millennium, much to be desired, much to be hoped for.

I have met two Presidents; one whose like I shall never see again, Theodore Roosevelt; after him, William Howard Taft. I have met many artists, sculptors, novelists, all famous in their own line of work. In my state I have met many of the men who have helped to make its history and added to its honor and glory.

I have never been abroad, and so have met no great foreigners in their own country. I have, however, corresponded with a number, among them Edmund Gosse, Andrew Lang and Arthur Christopher Benson.

What of religion? Has it touched your life? What of history, philosophy, science, travel, friendship? Also love and loves? Law? Politics?

Religion as expounded by the modern preacher from the pulpit has never touched me. The pathos of the life and death of Christ as described in the Bible has moved me to tears. I do not believe Christ to have been the Son of God, nor immaculately conceived. He was a wonderful man, and one who was beautiful in his life and most noble in his death. I feel cold when it comes to religion, because the world does not seem to have been benefited by Christianity; altho pretending to believe in the teachings of Christ, the world remains skeptical and barbarian—as the ages that preceded Christ's coming were.

I have read and enjoyed history—the history of my country and that of Europe and Asia. I have read many histories: *The History of the World*, by John Clark Ridpath, whom I knew personally, Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Macaulay's *History of England*, etc., etc. I have traveled only in the United States; never have been abroad. My friendships have been many, but mostly among men. Women seem to be afraid of a poet.

I have had several love affairs, some of a more or less shadowy nature. One supreme one alone, with her I married—Gertrude Foster McKelvey, who became my wife June 4, 1903. We have one child, Preston Hamilton Cawein, born March 18, 1904. I take no interest at all in Law or Politics.

A Questionnaire

Your poetical works—give name and date of each publication.

My first volume, *Blooms of the Berry*, was published in 1887. Then followed in order named: *The Triumph of Music*, 1888; *Accolon of Gaul*, 1889; *Lyrics and Idyls*, 1890; *Days and Dreams*, 1891; *Woods and Memories*, 1892; and so on. A list of some thirty books—named and each dated as to year of publication—is in *Who's Who in America*, a correct list down to the present year. *Poet and Nature* is now being published.

V

CAWEIN AS I KNEW HIM

Madison Cawein and I were personal friends for only one year, the year 1914, the last year of his life. He was my senior by six years. During the time I knew him I had many opportunities for gathering material relating to his life and his works. Unfortunately I did not then dream that I would some day write my recollections of him, much less undertake the compilation of a book on his career, and therefore made no notes whatever.

Prior to the summer of 1913 we had met a number of times, but most of the meetings took place on the street and were little more than formal greetings. He was a writer who had gained an international reputation, while I was known simply among a few as one interested in compiling history. This difference, however, meant nothing to him. Cawein was a man who greeted any and all persons he remembered, unless, as was frequently the case, his mind was occupied to the exclusion of all who passed him on the street. Both of us were busy men, and up to the time of the beginning of our friendship I was little concerned about poetry or the life of any poet.

In July, 1913, my *History of Muhlenberg County* was printed, and soon thereafter Mr. Cawein saw a copy of it at the publishers, John P. Morton & Company. A few weeks later we met by chance, and he asked me if I was the "bird" who wrote the "Muhlenberg book." He evidently had read part of it, for he commented on the few poems quoted and manifested an interest in some of the local traditions I had recorded. One day in late September of that year, he stopped me on the street and told me it was his intention to look into the early history of Kentucky with a view to using some incidents as bases for poems, and would like to talk with me on the subject. A day or two later I sent him a copy of my history with a note saying I would spend the month of October in the country and, upon my return would look him up. About the time I came back, I received the following note from him:

Louisville, Kentucky, October 30, 1913.

My dear Mr. Rothert: I have been reading in your *History of Muhlenberg County* on and off for some three or four weeks now, and with a great deal of interest. I find your descriptions of Kentucky most vivid, and the incidents and facts stated and described as fascinating as fiction.

You have a direct, terse style, and the episodes narrated, such as those of the Harpes and the Story of Lonz Powers, are graphic, to say the least.

The poems quoted by you in this history are pieces of literature and should be perpetuated in some Kentucky collection of verse. The one entitled "God's Plow of Sorrow" is a little masterpiece which I thank you for introducing me to. All in all the work is a most interesting one with its data of citizens and events. I thank you for the copy you so kindly sent to me.

Very sincerely yours,

Madison Cawein.

It so happened that beginning about this time we met on the street more frequently than before, and also made it a point to sit together at the meetings of the Filson Club and the Louisville Literary Club. By the first of January I had called his attention to every incident in Kentucky history known to me which I felt might serve as a subject for a poem. Strange as it may seem, it was not until after that time—that is, not until the original object of our getting together had been accomplished—was there, as I recall it, anything like a semblance of intimacy between us. One day, some months later, he remarked, "Well, Otto, ours wasn't a case of love at first sight; was it?"

During the course of the year I knew Cawein, we ate together a number of times at his home and mine; also in restaurants. I accompanied him a few times to Iroquois Park; made a pilgrimage with him into the backwoods of Muhlenberg County, and was present at every sitting while his portrait was being painted by J. Bernhard Alberts. These minglings and some of my other associations, together with a few personal observations, are here set forth.

In February, 1914, the Caweins moved from their residence in St. James Court into the St. James Apartments on the opposite side of the Court. Shortly thereafter Mr. Cawein and I began to call on each other and continued these visits up to the time of his death. He came to my home more frequently that I went to his. He realized that my mother was old and feeble, and for that reason I remained at home as much as possible. Furthermore, during the summer of 1914 Mrs. Cawein and their son Preston spent about six weeks at Chau-

tauqua, New York. Mrs. Cawein had gone there for the purpose of continuing her preparations as a dramatic reader and concert singer by giving readings and appearing on some of the programs. Our house was a large old fashioned one and Mr. Cawein was glad to come there, especially while his wife and son were away. He seemed more relaxed in our spacious rooms than in any place I ever saw him, except in the woods. His poetry and my efforts in history were sometimes referred to, but seldom, if ever, discussed. There were, however, many other subjects which formed the topics of many of our chats: literature, art, science, religion, travels, current events, writers, artists, some of his personal friends and mine—life in general.

As just stated, I accompanied him a few times to Iroquois Park. This park, about two miles south of the city limits, contains 675 acres. It was originally called Jacob Park, and is still so designated by many who frequent the place. Except for the winding and well kept roads it is a natural park, made and maintained by nature, or as Cawein once expressed it to me "It's an ungroomed park." Its many secluded nooks appealed to the poet. The road winding up and down the hillside offers a succession of grand landscapes, several of which are views of Louisville in the distance.

On one occasion we wended our way to the top of the hill indulging, as we walked, in nothing other than seemingly idle conversation. When we reached the point where a view of the city is best presented, I casually remarked that Louisville, in time, would spread and reach the outskirts of Jacob Park, and in doing so all the natural beauty now in the scene would be obliterated and become a part of a panorama of flats and factories. He paused a moment and then replied, "Yes, that's quite probable, but you and I can always come back, in memory, and through all eternity see it as we now see it." This remark probably would have been forgotten by me had I not read, after his death, his "The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries" and reflected on the speech beginning, "When I am dead, my soul shall haunt these woods."

This is only one of many instances in which I heard what I regarded as nothing more than a casual comment on a casual subject. After I began reading Cawein's poetry—I read very little of it during his life—I realized more and more that many of the remarks I heard him make in conversation with me were but reflections of some of his poems, and that notwithstanding his financial reverses and other troubles he continued to see poetry in everything. Judged by his conversation he seemed to be nothing more than a modest man, but in his poetry there is, as I see it, abundant evidence that he was an inspired man. In his poems he describes the things he saw with his own eyes and also gives expression to the inspired thoughts that flowed from his own soul.

Most of his poems were written, as it were, in the first person; very few are an expression of the third person. The more I read his poetry the more I realize how truly autobiographical it is, and how truly it presents his own poetic adventures. It reveals every one of his characteristics. His modesty, for instance, is shown in the proem to *Myth and Romance:*

> There is no rhyme that is half so sweet
> As the song of the wind in the rippling wheat;
> There is no metre that's half so fine
> As the lilt of the brook under rock and vine;
> And the loveliest lyric I ever heard
> Was the wildwood strain of a forest bird.
> If the wind and the brook and the bird would teach
> My heart their beautiful parts of speech,
> And the natural art that they say these with,
> My soul would sing of beauty and myth
> In a rhyme and a metre that none before
> Have sung in their love, or dreamed in their lore,
> And the world would be richer one poet the more.

That Cawein was a Pantheist is apparent in many of his poems. The day he presented me with a copy of *Woman and Her Relations to Humanity* he gave me a brief history of his mother's connection with the book. In answer to my question as to whether or not he, like his mother, was a Spiritualist, he then said in substance: "I am what might be called a believer in Spiritualism and have been for many years, but I never practiced it nor seriously tried to investigate it. I believe in a hereafter and that the soul retains its identity and that then, as now, it forms a part of the Great Whole. My mother herself could not account for nor explain her power as a medium, nor could anyone else who tried to do so. All I know and all she knew was that when in a trance she transmitted messages from the departed to the living. I sometimes believe we are controlled more by the departed than by the living."

On another occasion he told me, as he had told others before, that he believed in fairies and spirits. In answer to my question whether or not he had ever seen any fairies or ghosts, he hesitated a moment and said that he had not.

In the spring of 1914 I invited Cawein to take a trip to Muhlenberg County with me. I felt that he needed a diversion and that getting into a country he had not yet seen might interest him. I knew he was looking for incidents in Kentucky history, and having friends in Greenville and other parts of Muhlenberg County and being somewhat familiar with its history I had reason to believe that he would be benefited by the trip even if it did not supply him with new

material for poems. He cheerfully accepted the invitation. "Yes," he said, "I would like to ramble through the wilds of old Muhlenberg and hear some of its traditions as told by the people themselves." For one reason or another, the trip was postponed again and again until fall. In the meantime we often discussed the contemplated pilgrimage and invited our friend Young E. Allison to join us. Cawein looked forward to this outing with a boyish interest. This proved to be the poet's last trip to the country and included his last public reading, and I shall therefore give some detailed account of the pilgrimage.

On October 8, Cawein, Mr. Allison and I left Louisville, and in the afternoon were met at the Greenville Station by a "reception committee" consisting of several of my old friends to whom I had written that we were coming. Our plan was to go at once to the home of Alvin L. Taylor, six miles in the country, but "the committee" urged us to remain in town over night and invited Cawein to give a reading the following morning before the high school. He cheerfully consented.

We were escorted in royal style to The Old Inn where we were the guests of Orien L. Roark, editor, Harry M. Dean, prose and verse writer, and Alvin L. Taylor, farmer.

The next morning we were given a breakfast in the James L. Rogers home by Mrs. Felix Rice, musician, and Miss Amy M. Longest, county superintendent of schools. The Rogers were out of town, but had invited the two ladies to use their spacious dining room for the occasion. The table was profusely decorated with blooming morning-glories. Cawein later told me that he had been wined and dined often, formally and informally, but never before had any decorations touched his heart as did this display of one of his favorite flowers.

The Rogers residence stands on the site of the log house built about 1800 by Captain Charles Fox Wing, who was one of the founders of Greenville, a soldier of the War of 1812, and who had served as county clerk from the county's beginning down through a period of more than fifty years. A number of traditions regarding Captain Wing were told at the table. The one that seemed to impress Cawein most was the story of the flag: On every third day of July from 1800 until his death in 1861, this patriot planted a tall pole in the court house yard and early on the Fourth, sunshine or storm, hoisted the identical flag; and when he died, the old banner was placed on his breast and buried with him. "It's a fine story," said Cawein later, "and now that I have been on the ground, Captain Wing's life has given me some history to think about."

After breakfast we walked to the auditorium of the public schools. The poet was greeted by the pupils of all grades and about one hundred men and women of Greenville. It fell to me to "introduce the speaker." From those of his own books that were available

he read "Topsy Turvy," "Ballad of Low-Lie-Down," "Mound Men," "So Much to Do," also "A Boy's Heart," and one or two other poems. The audience was very attentive and gave him long applause. On our way out he whispered to me, as though confiding a secret, that he was pleased with the audience's manifestation of appreciation. I thought he had read unusually well and therefore congratulated him:

"Madison," I said, "you did 'bully'. If the readings for which you are now preparing are as good as this one, then your hoped-for success as a platform reader is an assured thing."

He replied somewhat seriously, "The way you 'slung the bull' about me as the greatest poet that ever came down the pike, it was up to me to do my darnedest to try to save your face."

The remark amused me for he very rarely indulged in slang or the vernacular; and it also embarrassed me, for the tone of his voice indicated a disapproval of a statement I had made in the introductory remarks before the school: "Mr. Cawein is America's greatest poet and the world's greatest nature poet."

Immediately after the reading we drove in a surrey to the farm of James Pannell, about three miles from Greenville. I had written to Mr. Pannell and suggested that he prepare an old-fashioned dinner for us and serve it in pioneer style. This he did with great success. Mr. Pannell knew many of the county's traditions and could tell them in an interesting way. While at dinner and while rambling over his farm, he recalled local stories of all kinds, from the gloomiest of tragedies to the funniest of "fairy-tales." Mr. Pannell is the "Jim Hanna" in J. Caldwell Browder's *Nisi Prius*, published in 1912.

We drove through a heavy rain to the Alvin L. Taylor farm where we arrived a little before dark. "It took you five months to get here, and I hope you will stay at least five weeks," was Mr. Taylor's greeting. I had known Mr. Taylor for many years in both a social and a business way. I had visited him often and was almost as much at home in his home as in my own. Before we sat down to supper Cawein and Mr. Allison felt like they, too, were in the hands of an old friend.

Mr. Taylor's family consisted of himself, his daughter Mrs. Edith Taylor Cornett, and her husband Earl Cornett. Mrs. Cornett was a good looking, modest, intelligent young wife and one who knew how to meet guests under any circumstances. She was with her father and husband when we alighted from the surrey. After we had chatted a few minutes Cawein took from the lapel of his coat a beautiful yellow rose that had been given to him by one of the girls at the Greenville school, and presenting it to Mrs. Cornett said, "Mrs. Cornett, may your life ever be as bright as this rose is now."

When Cawein and I were getting ready to retire, I remarked that I hoped he had seen and heard enough during the day to supply him with sufficient material for a dozen volumes.

"I don't know what will stick," he said, "but I do know that Mrs. Cornett has given me something for reflection."

I asked him what it was and he simply murmured: "Not Yet."

The answer puzzled me. I presume I showed signs of some disappointment in not being taken into his confidence, for he explained, "The thought is this: not yet a mother; not yet a mother's love; not yet a mother's tears."

The next day we wandered around in the woods, visited an old graveyard, inspected the ruins of a long abandoned iron furnace and examined a few Indian mounds. That night we went fox hunting with Peter Cornett and a number of men and boys who had met for the purpose of taking us out. It was a dark and a more or less rainy night. We walked many a mile. At intervals we sat on rail fences or old logs and exchanged stories while listening to the occasional bark of our dogs running in the distance. Our dogs—fox hounds and coon dogs—found no trail of a fox or coon, but "treed" a 'possum; and the 'possum was soon bagged.

Mr. Taylor, knowing that Peter Cornett had the reputation of being one of the best fox hunters in the county, invited him to call the next morning and relate some of his experiences to the poet. Cawein and I were still in bed when, about 6:30, the hunter arrived. Mr. Taylor urged him to enter our room and raise "Cain" about sleeping "after sun up." I was awake when "Peter the 'possum chaser" opened the door, and from all appearances Cawein was still asleep.

"Hey there," shouted Cornett at the top of his voice as he walked toward the bed occupied by the poet, "Hey there, you lazy Possum Hunter, the sun's done up, the feedin's done and breakfast's come and gone and over with! What do you think!"

Cawein opened his eyes, gazed at the fox hunter and his hunting garb, and answered with a smile, "I was thinking about the various kinds of barks of your dogs."

After breakfast we sat on Mr. Taylor's front porch where, for more than three hours, Peter Cornett gave us an interesting account of his experiences as a fox-chaser and coon and 'possum hunter. He explained the difference in the barks of a hound; these he designated "struck a trail," "on the chase," "treed" and "holding the tree." He described the nature of the fox and the coon—the sly fox and the cunning coon—and told how through close observation he learned to know their habits. He related the details of many of his hunts and commented on the actions of the dogs (and some of the men) that had gone with him. Cawein evidently was greatly interested in the hunter's knowledge and experience and the manner in which he talked. During the narrative he asked many questions, but made no notes. Although I did not recall ever seeing Cawein use a note book, it occurred to me that in this instance he might have been so absorbed as to have overlooked making notes. Later, when he and I were alone,

I brought up the subject, and he answered in substance: "The hunter's talk was exceedingly interesting, but too long and varied for note-making; and, besides, what I'll forget of it will be forgotten because it failed to make an impression on me. And why should I have notes on things that did not impress me."

The next morning—Sunday morning—found us in Greenville. While the church people were attending services, we leisurely walked around and viewed some of the historic homes and then rambled to the old graveyard. It was a beautiful autumn day. The town is always orderly and interesting, but during the solitude of the church hour it seemed like a "deserted village." The old graveyard is near the Court House. It was begun in the early part of last century and used until about twenty-five years ago. The age and the half-care and half-neglect of the place make it a solemnly picturesque spot. The old oaks and evergreens shade many of the mounds and stones—mounds hidden by myrtle, honeysuckle or briar, and headstones erect, leaning or fallen. We read aloud many of the inscriptions. Cawein seemed particularly interested in the stone slabs that had fallen and were partly hidden by vegetation. There was nothing in the poet's words or actions to indicate that he had more than the idle curiosity of any person who leisurely wanders around in an old graveyard he had never before heard of nor seen. Up to that time, as already stated, I had read very little of Cawein's poetry. Now in reading his poems, especially those pertaining to burial places, I ponder over the strange fact that a man who wrote such beautiful lines about graveyards could wander around in one and not reveal some evidence of his ecstasy. Every grave must have beckoned to his poetic soul. Evidently I saw and heard only the visible man, but did not feel the presence of the invisible poet.

We were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Lovell for dinner. Large bouquets of dahlias, zenias, asters, cox-comb and golden rod had been placed in the hall, parlor and dining-room in honor of the poet. Besides Cawein, Mr. Allison and myself there were two or three other guests. Everybody felt at home. Commenting on this little festivity Cawein said to me: "I enjoyed the dinner party very much; there were no foolish formalities. It was a good Sunday dinner—home food and garden flowers. I enjoy unpretentious affairs far more than formal dinners." And so I always found him during the year I knew him—more touched by little informal attentions than by formal functions given in his honor.

Bayles and James Oates drove us to their farm ten miles west of Greenville and at the foot of Harpes Hill, one of the most picturesque and historic hills in the county. The four Oates brothers had arranged an after-supper trip to Pleasant Hill Church, a country church where a revival was in progress. They explained that the place was on a high hill and the road to it a rough and rocky one, and for

that reason the surrey would be used. When the surrey and the two best horses were brought out, it occurred to me that a rough ride in an old farm wagon would be quite a novelty. Cawein agreed and an old wagon drawn by two old mules—Dock and Daisy—was placed at our disposal. Our crowd of about ten filled the chairs and board seats that had been provided. Singing was one of the features of the ride, especially during our return in the moonlight.

The church was very crowded, but by working a way through the men and boys massed near the door, we managed to find standing room in a rear corner. The corner happened to be one that sometimes is occupied by certain boys who, as we were told, "congregated there to devil the preacher." We were late and heard the last of the sermon only, but witnessed all the other revival features that followed. Shortly after the sermon, and while a number of men and women were attending to the mourners at the mourners' bench, the preacher, imploring others to come forward, pressed his way through the crowd toward the corner in which we stood. He did so, it seemed, for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not we were persons whose conduct was likely to interfere with the meeting.

When the preacher stood face to face with Mr. Cawein, he suddenly grasped the poet's hand as though he had found a long lost friend, and asked: "Brother, what are you—you a preacher—doing in this corner?"

Discovering he had taken a stranger for Preacher Kennerly, he bowed apologetically saying, "Pardon me, I thought you were a preacher."

Cawein politely replied, "Well, perhaps I am a preacher—I preach the Gospel of Nature."

The preacher smiled, moved on, continued his supplications, and soon regained his position near the pulpit.

That he should have been taken for a Baptist preacher amused Cawein very much. After we returned to Louisville I, on one or two occasions, called him "Preacher Cawein," and his response was invariably to the effect that he felt more like a boy the night we were at Pleasant Hill Church than he had since the days of his youth, and he hoped that the next time he was taken for a country preacher, he would be asked to "do" a little expounding of the Gospel of Nature.

The Oates farm, as already stated, is at the foot of Harpes Hill. Near the top of the hill is a small cove in which Big Harpe and Little Harpe, two dreadful outlaws and their three wives, camped for a short time in 1799. Not far from this lair Big Harpe was captured, and his head cut off and stuck on the end of a pole and displayed on the main road as a warning to other murderers. We visited the cove and other nearby places associated with the Harpes and heard many of the traditions pertaining to these outlaws of pioneer times, in all of which Cawein was greatly interested.

The view from Harpes Hill is beautiful, especially in fall when the leaves are turning. "Yes, it is beautiful," said Cawein, "I have seen more majestic and more awe-inspiring scenery, but not since my visits to John Fox, Jr., in the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky, some twenty-five years ago, have I seen any landscape more beautiful than the view from this hill. But the knobs near Louisville and the hills near Brownsboro have fascinated me from my early boyhood and they still appeal to me more than any other hills." While we were walking around on Harpes Hill looking at some Indian mounds and taking in the scenery from various points, Mr. Oates gave us an account of how the fox hunters use the top of the hill as their stamping ground. He explained that because of its height, form and location, the hunters watching and waiting on the summit can hear their dogs for miles around—sometimes ten to twenty hounds chasing one fox. "When these fox hunts take place," declared Mr. Oates, "there's music in the air, often continuing from dusk to dawn. No music is more thrilling than the horn of the fox hunter and the bark of his running hounds."

Cawein had often heard a few dogs on a chase, but never, as he expressed it, "A full orchestra of fox hounds." The brothers Oates invited us to remain two days longer, and assured us that in the meantime they could get together the fox hunters of the Harpes Hill country and their seventy-five or more hounds. Cawein had an engagement in Louisville the next day and therefore was unable to extend his stay in the country. The boys promised him that a meeting of the fox hunters would take place at any time he might set. He thanked them very politely.

In this instance, as in a number of others that came under my personal observation, Cawein's thanks seemed, on the surface, more formal than heartfelt. I judge that his few words of thanks were sometimes interpreted as an expression of more or less indifference, when in reality he felt very grateful. The comments he made later on this invitation to the proposed fox hunt and on other attentions that had been given during the time I knew him, convinced me that he appreciated from the bottom of his heart any and all interests shown in him or in his efforts to write poetry.

A few weeks after we returned from Muhlenberg County Cawein accepted the invitation of J. Bernhard Alberts to pose for a portrait. Cawein, knowing that Alberts had a number of commissions to keep him occupied for many months, asked, "Why waste your time on me when you can get others who pay for your work?" The invitation nevertheless pleased the poet, for he realized that the portrait was proposed as a mark of appreciation. During the last year of Cawein's life nothing occurred in which I was directly or indirectly involved that seemed to affect him more than this manifestation of interest in him and his work.

The time for the first sitting was arranged, and at exactly two o'clock in the afternoon, the hour set, the poet walked into the studio and laying down some fish wrapped in paper said, "Well, boys, here I am, your victim, and ready for business. I bought these fish to take home with me, and not for a fish fry in your studio. I like to carry things home for the kitchen; often the carrying makes them taste better."

The canvas was ready and the artist soon decided upon a pose for his subject. I occupied a chair near the poet and he and the artist and I chatted while the painting was being done. Literature and art and current events were among our topics. There was no restraint of any kind. We talked freely on all subjects, and usually in a more or less jovial spirit. I can not now recall many of the details, but I remember distinctly that no matter of whom Cawein spoke it was never in uncomplimentary terms.

The only callers admitted into the studio were Mr. Alberts' two brothers, Bruno and Gisbert, who were artists and often joined us in our rambling talks and also at the dinners after the sittings.

There were seven or eight sittings. I was present at every one. Cawein's friendly eyes showed more than his words that he appreciated the artist's efforts. On several occasions we discussed the bronze bust of him that had been placed in the Louisville Free Public Library. He said no honor bestowed upon him touched him as did that recognition by his home people. He told us the bust was made in Indianapolis and was based chiefly on three photographs taken for the purpose. Mrs. Cawein and many others did not consider it a good likeness, and I am inclined to think that he agreed with them. Yet in our discussions of this subject he never expressed himself on that point. He, however, very modestly, and in a tone of voice that indicated deep appreciation, declared that "It is a thing to be proud of; I am elated."

Mrs. Cawein was very much pleased with the portrait. "It is a perfect likeness," she said to us in the studio. "You have painted him 'warts and all', for although Madison is only forty-nine, I am sorry he looks like a man of sixty, and I fear that when he reaches that age, he will look like a man of eighty."

A few days after the portrait was finished Cawein gave me a copy of his book *The White Snake*, and in it he wrote: "To Otto A. Rothert, in memory of artistic hours passed in company together at the Alberts' Studio when discussing with 'Ben,' Bruno and Gisbert Alberts my portrait in process of completion. The Victim, Madison Cawein, November, 1914."

The White Snake made a total of twenty-one books autographed by Cawein for me. A few months after we had become friends I began assembling his books with a view of making a Complete Collection and having every copy autographed. I had been searching for some

weeks for the thirteen out-of-print volumes required to complete the Collection and had succeeded in procuring all except four when the poet died. His plan was to autograph all thirteen volumes at one time and thus avoid similarity of inscriptions. What proved to be his last call at my home took place two days before he suffered the apoplectic stroke that resulted in his death. Some time during his last call I incidentally remarked that by Christmas I probably would have procured the four missing volumes and we would then be ready for the inscriptions. Picking up three of his brochures that were lying on the table—*Christmas Rose and Leaf, Whatever the Path* and *The Days of Used To Be*—he suggested, "Let's dispose of these now, for I suppose you want them inscribed also." He wrote a Christmas greeting to me in each of the three and dated every one "December 25, 1914." Little did we realize that he would be dead and buried before that approaching Christmas day. I have thus in effect something curious—three of the poet's booklets autographed after his death.

During the last week or two of his life he and I commented, more than once, on the suddenness and seriousness of apoplectic and paralytic strokes. It was a subject that naturally presented itself, for my mother, aged eighty and with whom I was living, was then in a hopeless condition as the result of a fatal stroke received a few weeks before. He called my attention to the fact that his father and two of his father's brothers and his mother and two of her sisters died immediately after, or in consequence of, apoplectic strokes. "So you see," he added, "it is somewhat likely I'll die the same way; but no matter how and when I go, I hope I'll be at home at the time, and not on one of the reading tours for which Gertrude and I are now preparing."

Cawein had often told me he would like to purchase a few acres of forest land near Brownsboro and there live in a "woods home" the rest of his life. So in replying to his observations on the time and place of his death, I remarked:

"You'll live long in your long-dreamed-of woods home. The kinspeople to whose deaths you referred were in good health before stricken. You have never been in good health, and since poor health often means a long life, you are very likely to reach your four score and ten. By that time the whole English speaking world will be appreciating your work, and through your poems and your readings you will have made an independent fortune."

He answered cheerfully as he walked out of the house, "You may be right. At any rate, I'll see you again in a day or two." I saw him "in a day or two"; he was at home, upon his death bed, the victim of apoplexy. The mind that had seen so much beauty was enveloped in darkness. He never knew consciousness again.

VI

THE DEATH OF CAWEIN

The Louisville papers devoted many columns to Cawein at the time of his illness and death. When he died the national dailies published news items to that effect, and literary journals commented on his life and works. The clippings here reprinted tell the story of his death, and indicate the esteem in which he was then held at home and throughout the country.

1914, December 4, *Louisville Times:* MADISON CAWEIN SERIOUSLY STRICKEN. FAMOUS POET IS FELLED BY A SUDDEN STROKE DURING THE EARLY MORNING.

Madison Cawein, Kentucky poet, whose works have gained recognition throughout the literary world, lies seriously ill at his home, No. six St. James Apartments. Without the slightest warning he was stricken by a vertiginous attack at nine o'clock this morning and since has been unconscious. His condition is such as to cause apprehension.

Apparently the celebrated poet has been in his usual health, and news of his sudden illness comes as a shock to his friends and admirers. He arose at the customary hour this morning and took breakfast, after which he went into his study for a time. He then went to the bathroom to shave preparatory to a visit to the central section of the city on business, when he was stricken. As was his custom he had locked the bathroom door, and it was necessary to force in the door to reach him, after the noise of his fall to the floor had alarmed his mother-in-law. His brother, Dr. Charles L. Cawein, of 1316 South Second Street, and Dr. Henry A. Cottell, of 1424 South Fourth Street, a lifelong friend, were hastily summoned. Efforts to revive the patient have been unavailing.

Mr. Cawein was born in Louisville March 23, 1865, and is a son of the late Dr. William and Christiana Cawein. He received his

education at the graded school and the Male High School in this city. He has a wife, Mrs. Gertrude Foster McKelvey Cawein, a daughter of John F. and Jane Sproule McKelvey, and a son, Preston Hamilton Cawein. He is a member of the Louisville Literary Club, Filson Club, Pendennis Club, Louisville Country Club, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the Poetry Society of America, Cliff Dwellers' Club of Chicago, and the Authors' Club of London, England.

1914, December 7, *Louisville Herald*, EDITORIAL: MADISON CAWEIN. [By Edward A. Jonas.]

By the bedside of Madison Cawein watches, not only the Commonwealth of Kentucky, but the Commonwealth of Letters. If, as has been said, the verdict of other lands is as the voice of a contemporaneous posterity, then does Madison Cawein o'ertop all others in American literature of today. England, not as a rule too kind to our writers, has not hesitated to acclaim his genius and surrender to his charm. Critics as competent and as careful as Edmund Gosse find in his work all the notes of permanency, all the attributes of a great and genuine gift. A singular felicity of phrase; an unusual sense of restraint; the simplicity of the master, the witchery of a well-stored mind; perfection of form; a real inspiration—all these and more belong to this son of Kentucky stricken before his race was fully run. At such a time words seem empty things. The sympathy and the sorrow are very real. We do but voice an earnest and widespread sense of loss.

1914, December 8, *Courier-Journal:* MADISON CAWEIN ANSWERS CALL. POET'S DEATH AFTER EIGHTY-SEVEN HOURS OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS. WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS AMONG THOSE WHO HONORED HIM. MANY NOTED VOLUMES FROM LOUISVILLIAN'S PEN. FAMILY AT HIS BEDSIDE.

Madison Cawein, one of the world's greatest poets, died at 12:25 o'clock this morning at his home, No. 6 St. James Apartments, in St. James Court.

Death came after eighty-seven hours of unconsciousness and was said to have been due to a blood clot at the base of the brain, caused by a blow in falling against a bath tub. Dr. Charles L. Cawein, his brother, and Dr. Henry A. Cottell were in constant attendance, and no investigation will be made of the accident by the coroner.

Until the last, the poet's wife, Mrs. Gertrude McKelvey Cawein, his only child, Preston Hamilton Cawein, and Mrs. Cawein's stepmother, Mrs. Anna M. McKelvey, watched at the bedside, hopeful for a return to consciousness or some slight sign of improvement.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke, Minister to The Netherlands; William Dean Howells and other literary friends and Mr. Cawein's brother, William Cawein, of Spokane, Washington, were notified. John Cawein, his only other surviving brother, arrived last night from Newport, Kentucky.

Mr. Cawein was stricken Friday just after he entered the bathroom of his apartment to shave, preparatory to a visit downtown. He had breakfasted with his family and spent a few minutes in his study.

As was his custom, Mr. Cawein locked the door after passing into the bathroom. A moment later Mrs. McKelvey heard him fall. Assistance was summoned and the door was forced open. Mr. Cawein, fully dressed, was lying in the dry bath tub. Blood trickled from a wound on the left side of his head. His shaving accessories had not been removed from a cabinet, which led to the belief he suffered the vertiginous attack immediately after stepping into the room.

All efforts to rouse the patient into a return to consciousness proved futile. It was thought at first that he had suffered a stroke of apoplexy, but development of a clot of blood at the base of the brain indicated, according to the physicians, that the state of coma was due to the injury to his head.

Besides his widow, little son and Dr. Charles L. Cawein, the poet leaves two other brothers, John and William Cawein.

Mr. Cawein was forty-nine years old. He was a member of the Louisville Literary Club, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the Poetry Society of America, the Cliff Dwellers of Chicago, Authors' Club of London, England; Louisville Country Club, the Filson Club and the Pendennis Club.

Mr. Cawein was hailed throughout the literary world as a remarkable "poet of nature," and while all critics ranked him with the greatest versifiers of this vein, not a few of them placed him at the very top.

Mr. Cawein was known to Louisville people pretty generally as a poet; to a broader circle as "Kentucky's poet," and in New York and London literary reviewers reckoned him among the greatest of nature poets of all time.

The magic of his nature landscapes was drawn from the Knobs back of New Albany, where as a boy, trudging along the road to school, while his brothers ran ahead, the beauty of things about him began to dawn for him. The inborn gift of the genius received development in the woods and hills and meadows of the country adjacent to Louisville, in the bluegrass regions of Central Kentucky and the Cumberland Mountains.

The Death of Cawein

"The solemn books of history tell us that Kentucky was discovered in 1769 by Daniel Boone, but he first discovers a country who sees it first, and teaches the world to see it. No doubt some day the city of Louisville will erect, in one of its principal squares, a statue to 'Madison Cawein, who discovered the beauty of Kentucky,'" wrote Edmund Gosse, a noted English critic, several years ago.

Louisville friends of the poet who long knew him as a nature poet-painter found cause for comment in the rather singular significance of one of his last poems, "At the End of the Road." It found Mr. Cawein in a new vein, "singing not of young apple trees, but of old vagabonds; not of the gate into the meadow, but of the end of the road."

This poem, "At the End of the Road," was selected by William Stanley Braithwaite, of Boston, for his *Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1914*, being selections from all magazine poetry of the year. It follows:

This is the truth as I see it, my dear,
Out in the wind and the rain;
They who have nothing have little to fear—
Nothing to lose or to gain.
Here by the road at the end o' the year,
Let us sit down and drink of our beer,
Happy-Go-Lucky and her Cavalier,
Out in the wind and the rain.

Now we are old, oh, isn't it fine,
Out in the wind and the rain?
Now we have nothing, why snivel and whine?
What would it bring us again?
When I was young I took you like wine,
Held you and kissed you and thought you divine—
Happy-Go-Lucky, the habit's still mine,
Out in the wind and the rain.

Oh, my old Heart, what a life we have led,
Out in the wind and the rain!
How we have drunken and how we have fed!
Nothing to lose or to gain.
Cover the fire now; get we to bed.
Long was the journey and far has it led.
Come, let us sleep, lass, sleep like the dead.
Out in the wind and the rain.

Madison Cawein

In one of his lyrics ["Intimations of the Beautiful"] Mr. Cawein asked:

The song-birds, are they flown away,
  The song-birds of the summer time,
That sang their souls into the day,
  And set the laughing hours to rhyme?
No cat-bird scatters through the hush
  The sparkling crystals of her song;
Within the woods no hermit-thrush
  Trails an enchanted flute along.

To this inquiry, the answer of Mr. Gosse was: "The only hermit-thrush now audible seems to sing from Louisville, Kentucky. America will, we may be perfectly sure, calm herself into harmony again and possess once more her school of singers. In those coming days history may perceive in Mr. Cawein the golden link that bound the music of the past to the music of the future through an interval of comparative tunelessness."

"The virgin timber-forests of Kentucky, the woods of honey-locust and buckeye, of white oak and yellow poplar, with their clearings full of flowers unknown to us by sight or name, from which in the distance are visible the domes of the far-away Cumberland Mountains—this seems to be the hunting field of Mr. Cawein's imagination," said Mr. Gosse. "He brings the ancient gods to Kentucky and it is marvelous how quickly they learn to be at home there." [Introduction to *Kentucky Poems*.]

Madison Julius Cawein was born in Louisville, March 23, 1865. His father, Dr. William Cawein, came to this city early in the nineteenth century from the Rhine Palatinate, where the family, who were Huguenots, had resided since their flight from Paris after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. His mother was Christiana Stelsly, the daughter of a German cavalry officer in Napoleon's army, who, after the defeat at Waterloo, came with his wife to the United States, remained for a time in Ohio, but eventually settled in Louisville. Here William Cawein met Christiana and married her; to them were born four sons and a daughter. In 1874 the family moved to Oldham County; thence, after a year, to the "Knobs" back of New Albany.

"Here," said the poet himself, "I found my first love of nature. For nearly three years we lived there in a small farmhouse on the top of a hill, surrounded by woods and orchards, meadows and cornlands. If ever children were happy they were happy there. We walked two and a half miles every school day from the fall to the spring, to the New Albany district school; but we enjoyed it. I used to walk along by myself making up wonderful stories of pirate treasures and adventures, which I could continue serial-wise from day to day in my imagination unendingly—dependent upon no publisher."

The family returned to Louisville about 1879. The young genius was sent to the public schools and later, in 1881, entered the Male High School. At this age the favorite reading of Cawein consisted in tales of the Wild West. When he was 16 years old, legends of chivalry attracted his attention. He secured and read "The Fairie Queene," and liked it so well that he wrote to the publishers for the remaining six books, only to be chagrined to learn that Spenser never had completed the poem.

It was under the inspiration of Professor Reuben Post Halleck, then instructor in English and elocution at High School, Cawein was led to walk with the masters. He was especially interested in Scott, Shelley, Tennyson and Keats, and wrote many lengthy and bombastic imitations of them. These he used to declaim from the rostrum of the old school chapel. He was graduated in the class of 1886, preparing the class poem "Mariners," which he published nineteen years later in *Nature Notes*.

Longing of the young poet to begin a collegiate course was ungratified, due to circumstances. He considered also entering the Navy or West Point, but found these, too, impracticable. His first employment was as an accountant for his brother, who was cashier in the Newmarket, a pool-room on Third Street. For nearly eight years the poet toiled in the rather unsympathetic atmosphere of tobacco smoke, auctioneering and betting. When not exchanging money for the tickets of the winning betters, he was snatching chances of pursuing his favorite studies, Ovid and Heine, natural science and the English classics.

On Sundays, Cawein roamed the wooded hills along the Kentucky shore of the Ohio River or about the falls on the Indiana banks, or else among the knobs, the playmates of his childhood, prying into the lives of tree, flower, weed, bird and insect. Here he strolled, composing in his mind, stopping now and then to set down in his note-book the completed stanza.

[The foregoing account of Mr. Cawein's death is followed by about a column devoted to brief comments on his various books.]

1914, December 8, *Louisville Times*, EDITORIAL: MADISON CAWEIN. [By Charles Hamilton Musgrove.]

Madison Cawein, Nature's poet and priest, Kentucky's poet, our poet, is no more. In the language of another, gifted also with the poetic vision, "he had reached that spot where manhood's morn just touches noon, and the shadows still were falling toward the West." With his rare powers fully ripened and at the zenith of his fame, honored and loved by the literati of two continents and enraptured

with the glittering vistas which stretched before him in the Land of Song, darkness fell suddenly upon his path, the hand of Azrael was laid upon his harp, and it is mute.

Madison Cawein was the apostle of Nature. He adored her in all her moods. He was her humble worshiper and loyal interpreter. Like Hugo, he was awed by her "enormous gearing whose first motor is the gnat and whose last wheel is the zodiac." He was a friend of the chipmunk, the interpreter of the thrush, the companion of the eagle. Sea and sky, wind and rain, heath and heather, "twilight and evening star," all had a message for his soul, all spoke in symbols that he understood. Now he is gone. One melodious voice between the silences is still.

In this commercial age when there is such a dearth of the pure poetic art, when the "homely, slighted shepherd's trade" carries with it little more than the recompense of a mission faithfully fulfilled, of a heart consecrated to the divine ideals of beauty, the world can ill spare a singer like Mr. Cawein. It is particularly saddening to know that as much as he had accomplished, much more is left undone. Even on the day that he was stricken with his last illness, he was busy with many plans for the future, glowing with the rapture of creating, thrilled with the inspiring fervor of kindling dreams.

Now he is gone. Poesy stands beside his bier with a wreath of immortelles. Nature in mourning garb murmurs a requiem. His sorrowing wife and little son have lost a devoted husband and father. The world has lost a poet.

1914, December 8, *Louisville Post*, Editorial: The death of Madison Cawein. [By Richard W. Knott.]

The death of Madison Cawein will carry regret to thousands who knew him only through his books; and that regret deepens into grief to all who knew him well. There was with this poet of the quiet paths no separation from the round of daily duties and pleasures. All he saw added to the joy of life, and made him a delightful companion, unworldly in many ways, but in all things generous and in all ways welcome

These hills and streams, these meadows and open roads, and winding paths, held messages for him alone, calling him every year to new visions and to new desires. Here in Kentucky the old legends came to him trailing clouds of glory and lived again. Through the shadows and silence of the beeches, oaks and maples, through the tangled underbrush, out through the hanging honeysuckles, ivies and trumpet vines, he looked as through a casement, into a world

peopled by that mighty host called into existence by the poets and oracles, the sages and dreamers and myth-makers who lived and wrought when the race was young.

By these streams, known to all of us, over the knobs north and south of the Ohio, along every by-path and no-path of Cherokee, he wandered joyously, and ever-new beauties blossomed at his feet. Here he felt that same presence which disturbed Wordsworth along the banks of Wye, "with the joy of elevated thoughts and brought to him a sense sublime, of something more deeply interfused."

The end has come. The book, the wonderful book of visions and of beauty, is closed forever. In vain will frost write its magic call to him over the winter landscape; the eye of the seer is closed, and the wand with which he summoned the unseen inhabitants to their festivals has fallen, broken, from the hand of the master.

1914, December 9, *Courier-Journal*, EDITORIAL: MADISON CAWEIN. [By Harrison Robertson.]

Madison Cawein lived all of his too-short life in or near Louisville. As boy and man he was our associate and neighbor. We knew well his personal worth and we took pride in his literary achievement and reputation. Certainly he was not "without honor in his own country." Rather it was our delight to honor him. Indeed, such has been our admiration of him, so intimate have been our relations, that our perspective is perhaps too short for an accurate judgment as to his rank as a poet. But we can rest assured that he will not suffer before that world tribunal which assays and stamps mankind's product of pure gold.

The feature of Madison Cawein's career that especially impressed *The Courier-Journal* was his rare and unfaltering consecration to his ideals. He saw and felt the poetry of Nature, and it was his unswerving purpose to give it voice. He kept to that purpose from first to last. In an age of materialism, of business, of practical and scientific activity, rather than of esthetic inclination and atmosphere, an age of fallow art and tailor-made poetry, he turned his back to Mammon and his face to Pan, steadfast, through every vicissitude of environment or fortune, to his inspiration.

Nothing short of such an inspiration could have buoyed him through to triumph. In his youth, confined by day to the drudgery of an uncongenial clerk's desk, giving his Sundays and holidays to his beloved fields and his evenings to composition, he persevered long with little encouragement except that received through the publication of his verses in *The Courier-Journal*. For several years nearly all

of his shorter poems first reached the public through the colums of this paper, and, unknown beginner though he was, so unmistakable was its quality that *The Courier-Journal* cannot recall that any of it ever shared the fate of the great mass of "unavailable" versification which pours into a newspaper office. Readers of *The Courier-Journal* soon came to realize that a genuine poet was among them, and the appreciation he won in those early days followed him ardently to the last.

Gradually the circle of his recognition and the field of his publication widened, and the acclaim of such authorities as Howells and Aldrich and Gosse opened the way for the international reputation which ultimately he won.

Perhaps the chief criticism which has been urged against Cawein's poetry is that it lacked in appeal to the human heart—that it has struck not those simple elemental chords of feeling which move mankind and die only with mankind. But the heart of man is only one manifestation of the heart of Nature, and from the heart of Nature who that survives Cawein so happily has sought its secrets or so richly has given them tongue?

While refraining, as already explained, from attempting now any comparative appraisement of Cawein even we, his home folks, may say so much without inviting disagreement in any court of competent criticism.

1914, December 10, *Louisville Herald*: PAY LAST TRIBUTE IN SIMPLE SERVICE. NUMEROUS FRIENDS GATHER AT CHURCH WHERE FUNERAL OF MADISON CAWEIN TAKES PLACE. SIMPLICITY MARKS SETTING TYPICAL OF POET'S NATURE.

The body of Madison Cawein, Kentucky's famous nature poet, was laid to rest yesterday in Cave Hill Cemetery, following brief but impressive funeral services at the Church of the Messiah. The funeral was private, but a large number of friends gathered at the church to pay their last respects. Floral offerings were banked about the altar and on the casket was laid a spray of fir and a branch of russet red leaves, indicative of the simplicity of his life and of his love for the works of nature.

The last services were conducted by the Reverend Maxwell Savage, pastor of the Church of the Messiah [Unitarian] and the Very Reverend Charles Ewell Craik, rector of Christ Church Cathedral. [Episcopal]. "Dreams" and "Requiem" written by Mr. Cawein, were read by Dr. Savage. The order of the services follow:

Organ—"Dead March" in "Saul" (Handel). Scripture Reading—The Reverend Maxwell Savage. Funeral Chant—Choir.

Invocation—The Reverend Maxwell Savage. Hymn—"Nearer, My God, to Thee"—Choir. Reading of Poems by Mr. Cawein—The Reverend Mr. Savage—(a) "Dreams," (b) "Requiem." Anthem—"Lachramosa," Requiem Mass (Mozart)—Choir. Hymn—"Friend After Friend Departs" (Mr. Cawein's favorite hymn)—Montgomery. Prayer—The Very Reverend Dr. Charles Ewell Craik. Eulogy of Mr. Cawein—The Reverend Maxwell Savage. Hymn—"Lead, Kindly Light"—Choir. Funeral March—"Song Without Words" (Mendelssohn)—Played by Miss Louise Hollis, organist.

A brief, but touching tribute to Mr. Cawein was paid by Dr. Savage. "Great is he who loses not in manhood his childlike heart was said long ago," said Dr. Savage, "and this was Madison Cawein." [The active pallbearers were William W. Thum, Cale Young Rice, W. T. H. Howe, R. P. Halleck, John Peter Grant and John L. Patterson. The honorary pallbearers were George DuRelle, Henry Watterson, Richard W. Knott, Dr. Henry A. Cottell, Edward J. McDermott and George T. Settle.]

1914, December 11, *Louisville Herald:* MADISON CAWEIN'S LAST VOLUME WILL BE RELEASED TODAY.

The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road, Madison Cawein's last volume, will be released to the public today by the publishers, John P. Morton & Company. A few days before Mr. Cawein's death, he made arrangements with the Kaufman-Straus Company to feature the work.

A large painting of Madison Cawein sitting at his desk will also be unveiled today in the "Cawein Window" of the Kaufman-Straus Company. The protrait is by J. Bernard Alberts, the young Louisville artist, who finished the picture two weeks ago. The painting has been greatly admired by friends of Mr. Cawein who have seen it.

Mr. Cawein's final volume is dedicated to John Burroughs, naturalist, poet and philosopher, "with the greatest admiration for the work he has done and is still doing for the True and Beautiful." A fly leaf carries an appreciation of Cawein's work by Dr. E. Y. Mullins, of Louisville, in which Dr. Mullins says:

"If the world would read Mr. Cawein's exquisite nature poems more generally and appreciatively, can any one doubt that our love of our great Commonwealth would be purified and elevated? There is a hoard of glorious gold, although not of the ordinary sordid kind, awaiting those who heed the 'Call of the Road.' As we follow we shall visit the tents where the tribes of beauty dwell, and see the wild-eyed girl of Spring awakening."

1914, December 11, *Courier-Journal:* WILL BEQUEATHS BULK OF CAWEIN ESTATE TO WIDOW.

The will of Madison J. Cawein, dated July 7, 1910, and probated in the County Court yesterday, bequeaths the bulk of his estate to his widow, Gertrude McKelvey Cawein. The widow is bequeathed all stocks, bonds and cash, with the exception of $1,000, which is left in trust to her for the benefit of their son, Preston Hamilton Cawein. [The $1,000 here referred to had been deposited in a bank about 1910, and at the time of the poet's death was drawing interest for the son; and it is still doing so in 1920.] Besides the personalty, including life insurance, the widow is bequeathed the copyright to all books of the testator published in this country and England. The testator carried an accident insurance policy of $11,500 and life insurance amounting to $5,000. [This is an error. Mr. Cawein carried a $10,000 accident policy and no life insurance.] The widow is named guardian of the son and literary executrix by the testator, while the Louisville Trust Company is named executor of the will.

MADISON CAWEIN'S WILL

[Mr. Cawein's will is written in his own hand. It has heretofore not been published: (Louisville, Ky., July 7, 1910. I, Madison J. Cawein, being of sound mind desire that in the event of my death all my property, personal and otherwise, to-wit: (all stocks and bonds and monies, including monies that at the time of my death may be margined on stocks, also stocks themselves if so desired) is to go to my beloved wife, Gertrude McKelvey Cawein, with the exception of $1,000 which I bequeath to my beloved son, Preston Hamilton Cawein, to be held and kept in trust for him by his mother, Gertrude Cawein, whom I appoint his guardian. To Gertrude McKelvey Cawein I bequeath also the copyrights to all my books published both in this country and in England, also all interest in them of whatever character. I appoint her my literary executor. The Louisville Trust Company, of Louisville, Kentucky, I appoint executor of this my last *will* and *testament.* Madison J. Cawein. Witnesses: J. M. Eddy, A. C. Mead Board)].

1914, December 15, *Courier-Journal:* EULOGY ON POET. FRIENDS' LOVE FOR CAWEIN VOICED AT LITERARY MEETING. WANT FAVORITE PATH AND OAK TO BEAR HIS NAME. ORIGINAL POEMS AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS OWN WORKS READ. RESOLUTIONS ARE ADOPTED.

Madison Cawein, the man and the poet, was eulogized last night by his friends at a memorial meeting held in his honor by the Louisville Literary Club in the assembly room of the Louisville Public Library.

The Death of Cawein

A bust of the poet, presented to the Library last year by the Louisville Literature Club, rested on a pedestal on the speaker's stand, having been taken there from the main corridor, where it was placed December 8, the day of the poet's death. It was draped with two laurel wreaths, one from the Libary staff and one from the poet's associates of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

President Thomas M. Gilmore, of the Literary Club, presided, and the Assembly Room was filled with literary and personal friends of the poet. Letters regretting their inability to be present were read from Miss Margaret Merker, the Reverend Dr. C. R. Hemphill, Henry Watterson, Richard W. Knott and Robert W. Brown. The exercises consisted of original poems, talks of appreciation and reading of select passages from the poet's works.

The club adopted a resolution, prepared in the form of a letter to the Board of Park Commissioners, asking that a winding wild-like path in Iroquois Park, where Mr. Cawein delighted in strolling, and a towering oak, which was his favorite tree, be christened with his name. If the board accedes to this request the path will be known as "Cawein's Walk," and the oak tree as "Cawein's Rest." The path leads from the foot of a hill in the park and meanders through an unimproved part of the park about three-quarters of a mile. The letter to the board, written by Professor Reuben Post Halleck, recited the fact that Mr. Cawein loved the path because it led through an unimproved woods, and that he wrote many beautiful poems under the shade of the big oak tree.

Formal resolutions reciting the history of Mr. Cawein, and containing a tribute to "a successful citizen and a poet of deserved renown," were reported by a committee of which Judge Charles B. Seymour was chairman, and adopted.

Madison Cawein's love for his fellow man, a passion excelling all his other qualities, was the prominent feature, as well as the underlying theme of all the addresses. All the speakers emphasized the truth of the characterization usually applied to him, that of nature poet, but each stressed the idea that he was something more, that he was a lover of mankind.

"Madison Cawein," a sonnet by Robert E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis, was read by Dr. Henry A. Cottell. The Reverend Dr. E. Y. Mullins, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, spoke on the subject, "An Estimate of Mr. Cawein as a Poet." Miss Ethel Allen Murphy read an original poem entitled "Wed Not His Name To Death." Lewis A. Walter gave reminiscences of the poet. Following a tribute by Miss Sallie Smyser, George Lee Burton spoke on "Madison Cawein, the Glorifier of the Commonplace." The Reverend Dr. U. G. Foote, pastor of the Methodist Temple, read two original poems, "In Memoriam" and "Gethsemane." Bert Finck, speaking to the subject, "A Few Remarks," eulogized the

democracy of the poet, his sincerity and modesty. Miss Marion Forster Gilmore read an original poem. The Reverend Dr. W. W. Landrum, pastor of the Broadway Baptist Church, read selections from Mr. Cawein's works and made a few comments. He said Mr. Cawein was not only a poet, but prophet and a preacher as well.

Miss Margaret Steele Anderson read an original poem. Miss Anderson was followed by Miss Anna Blanche McGill who spoke on "Human Elements," emphasizing, as the other speakers did, Mr. Cawein's democratic nature.

Dr. Henry A. Cottell read a sonnet, "In Memoriam," and in a short talk said he had lost his nearest and dearest friend. Herman Rave, of New Albany, who published his first book of poems when Mr. Cawein published his first, spoke on "A City Walk with Mr. Cawein." The walk was taken through a Louisville park when the two of them had just published their first works. "Even then," Mr. Rave said, "Mr. Cawein showed he was a lover of his fellow man. I think this talk about his being a nature poet and nothing more is all a mistake. There can be no nature poet without human love and sympathy. Mr. Cawein had the great gift also that makes all great men—inventors, poets, prophets—he had vision."

Miss Nannie Lee Frayser read several selections from Mr. Cawein's latest book. "All of them," she said, "possess an appeal to children as well as grown-ups." She predicted that Cawein would in the future be considered a great children's poet as well as a great nature poet. "You who are here tonight know him through his memories," she said, "but he will live in the future through our boys and girls as they shall come to know him, especially through his last book."

Professor Halleck paid a tribute to the literary excellence of Mr. Cawein's poetry, and noted with pleasure the profound regret which his taking off occasioned in Louisville, saying, in part: "Lovers of poetry in Louisville were gratified to see that its newspapers gave more space to the passing of Cawein than is usually accorded to the obituary of the very greatest financier, local or national. Years ago a prominent Southern newspaper boasted that it would not publish poetry at less than a dollar a line. Today no section of the country surpasses our Southland in honoring poets."

Dr. C. S. Gardner read a sonnet. A. H. Woodson, speaking on the subject, "More Than a Nature Poet," said: "Cawein was a real poet, therefore a great poet, because there is no mediocrity in the real poet."

William W. Thum, in a few appreciative remarks, said: "As a poet, that which characterized Madison Cawein was that which characterizes the poets of all the ages, imagination." Judge George Du Relle, with the subject, "At Sunset," paid the last tribute to the poet.

1914, December 18, *Louisville Post:* CAWEIN'S DEATH DUE AT APOPLEXY. CONCLUSION REACHED BY PHYSICIANS WHO HELD AUTOPSY ON POET. SKULL NOT FRACTURED. BLOW ON HEAD DUE TO FALL IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CAUSED THE STROKE.

Ten Louisville physicians reached the conclusion that the death of Madison Cawein was due to apoplexy, upon holding an autopsy at the undertaking establishment of Schoppenhorst Brothers. The autopsy had been demanded by the Fidelity and Casualty Company when counsel for the widow of the poet made request for payment on an accident insurance policy for $11,500, [for $10,000] payable to Mrs. Cawein.

Three physicians who had attended Mr. Cawein had given sworn testimony to Coroner Ellis Duncan, and on this Coroner Duncan had found that the death of Mr. Cawein was due to apoplexy. It was claimed for the widow, through counsel, that Mr. Cawein had suffered a stroke of vertigo or apoplexy, and that his skull was injured when his head struck a bathtub.

The post-mortem examination showed that the skull was not fractured, as had been reported, but that there was an abrasion on the head and a large blood clot on the brain. The body had been exhumed for the purpose of the autopsy, which was conducted by Dr. F. S. Graves, pathologist of the University of Louisville and of the City Hospital.

Dr. Charles L. Cawein, brother of Madison Cawein; Dr. Henry A. Cottell, his intimate friend, and Dr. Simrall Anderson had signed the death certificate to the effect that death was from apoplexy. However, the family of Mr. Cawein have authorized the statement that, in their opinion, the cerebral hemorrhage found was such as would have been caused by an external blow, as would result when a man would slip and cut his head. It was stated that an external wound was on his head when he was picked up unconscious in the bathroom at his apartments.

According to Dr. Cawein, he and other physicians at the examination were of the opinion that the blow on the head was the cause of the apoplectic stroke. Present at the autopsy were: Dr. Ellis Duncan, Dr. Charles L. Cawein, Dr. Henry A. Cottell, Dr. Simrall Anderson, Dr. John K. Freeman, Dr. Lee Baldauff, Dr. James R. Cottell, Dr. F. S. Graves, Dr. C. H. Harris, and Dr. Horace H. Grant.

Attorneys E. C. Roy and William W. Thum represent Mrs. Cawein, and the insurance company was represented by Fred Forcht and H. N. Lukins.

[The physicians not being unanimous in their opinion as to which came first—the fall or the stroke—the case was compromised and $7,500 paid to the widow.]

1914, December 27, *Courier-Journal:* CAWEIN PATH AND BRIDGE IN IROQUOIS DEDICATED BY HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI.

Simple exercises incident to the dedication of the Cawein Log Bridge and Cawein Path in Iroquois Park, where the late poet found inspiration for much of his verse, featured the annual midwinter walk of alumni of the Louisville Male High School yesterday afternoon.

Icy walks and the cold weather deterred many of the older alumni from joining. Judge Shackelford Miller and Lieutenant Governor Edward J. McDermott sent letters of regret to Professor Reuben Post Halleck, former principal of the High School. Professor Halleck was the originator of the reunion plan and leader of the band of students which started from his home, 1154 South Third Street, yesterday.

From Senning's Park the alumni walked to the top of the hill in Iroquois Park and then through the beech woods, habitual haunts of the poet, to the log bridge, one mile southwest of the hill. In the absence of Mr. McDermott, the address of dedication was delivered by Professor Halleck. He spoke briefly and closed his remarks by reading two verses of Cawein's "The Whippoorwill."

From the bridge the walkers went to the Cawein Walk, located about a mile away. This stretch of walk extends about a half mile through one of the prettiest sections of the park property, and the Board of Park Commissioners has been asked to commemorate the poet's memory by placing signs and notices along its course. Standing beneath an old white oak tree, Norvin Green, vice-president of the alumni association, delivered the dedication address. When he finished the party traversed the entire length of the path.

"All of those who went along today were enthusiastically in favor of having another reunion walk next year, and we will seek to select a date when snow and ice will not be around to frighten away the older members," said Professor Halleck last night.

[Since 1915 a pilgrimage, under the leadership of Reuben Post Halleck and of Miss Ethel Allen Murphy, leader of the Lyric Club of the Girls' High School, has been made every year, in September, over the Cawein paths. On Sunday, December 12, 1915, the services of the Church of the Messiah were conducted with special features in honor of Mr. Cawein. The Louisville Literary Club, as already shown, set aside its regular program for December 14, 1914, and devoted the evening to paying tributes to the dead poet. On March 21, 1915, the Adath Israel Sisterhood gave a Cawein Memorial Meeting. Since Mr. Cawein's death the Louisville Literary Club has held a Cawein Memorial Meeting every year: December 13, 1915; December 11, 1916; December 10, 1917; December 13, 1918; December 12, 1919, and December 10, 1920. The meeting in 1920 was held in the Music Room of Mrs. J. B. Speed; the other took place in the Louisville Free Public Library.]

The Death of Cawein

1914, December 18, *The New York Times*: Editorial in Review of Books.

In his brief span of life Madison Julius Cawein, whose death at his home in Kentucky was announced last week, contributed much that was of permanent value to American letters. He was only forty-nine years old when he died, but in his short career, his fine aims, his practical labors for the cause of letters stimulated the large circle of his personal acquaintances, and formed an appreciable factor in the literary progress of his generation. Mr. Cawein's first book, *Blooms of the Berry*, appeared in 1887. Since then he has been a prolific writer, both in prose and verse, the first collected edition of his poems, published in 1907, filling five volumes. In his own particular province, the poet of what has been called the twilight mood of nature—the mood of moonlight, of whippoorwills, of fireflies, of fairy rings—Mr. Cawein was supreme, touching the realities of this enchanting world of his with a deeper skill and human sympathy than one finds in the more fantastic muse of the author of "The Culprit Fay."

For a time, in *The Republic*, Mr. Cawein wandered from his rightful domain, but in his next volume of verse, *Minions of the Moon*, he returned to it with no lessening of his old-time spirituality and delicacy of touch. It is as the poet of nature that he will long be remembered. In this connection it is interesting to learn that his last book, partly prose, partly verse, will soon be published under the title *The Poet and Nature.*

1914, December 17, New York, *The Nation:* A Western Nature Poet.

The distinction of Madison Cawein, whose death is announced from Louisville, was as the best poet of nature the West has produced, and one of the best in the last generation in America; it was his limitation that he was little but a nature-poet. Of the fact that his work lay virtually in one field the critics have indeed made too much. It is true that his volumes, *Myth and Romance, Weeds by the Wall, A Voice on the Wind, Kentucky Poems, Days and Dreams*, are all chiefly of nature, often its mythological or romantic associations, but more often purely descriptive—written to render an æsthetic picture. But his descriptions are not purely external or wanting in poetic insight, and their recurrence is far from tiresome.

Invited to estimate Cawein's poetry, Mr. Howells tells us he asked, "Why always nature poems? Why not human-nature poems?"

"But in seizing upon an objection so obvious that I ought to have known it was superficial, I had wronged a poet who had never

done me harm in the very terms and conditions of his being a poet. I had made his reproach what ought to have been his finest praise, what is always the praise of poetry when it is not artificial and formal. I ought to have said, as I had seen, that not one of his lovely landscapes in which I could see no human figure but thrilled with a human presence penetrating to it from his most sensitive and subtle spirit until it was all but painfully alive with memories, with regrets, with longings, with hopes, with all that from time to time mutably constitutes us men and women, and yet keeps us children."

And it could be pointed out that the poet at times stepped successfully outside the narrower circle. "The Feud" is a dramatic episode of Kentucky; "Ku Klux" is as graphic; there are one or two real dramas, and lyrics in numbers—for Cawein was over-prolific—full of a rather pensive interpretation of youthful romance, with its incidents chosen impartially from Greece, England, the Germany of his ancestors, or Kentucky.

To analyze the qualities which made Cawein unique in his descriptions of Western nature, and discover why, among the Hays, Hoveys, Rileys, Piatts, Fieldses, Maurice Thompsons, he should hold his own place, is an interesting inquiry. No other had either his taste for nature or his exact eye. In this scientific age, when Maeterlinck makes an exhaustive study of the bee an illustration of his poetic philosophy, and Tennyson's successors know not only that ash-buds are black early in March, but many other botanical facts, he was our one distinctive poet-naturalist. Of dittany and the yellow puccoon he has written exactly, of mallow, ironweed, bluet, and jewel-weed, the cohosh, the bell-flower, the oxalis, the Indian-pipe; from his books a manual of Kentucky flora and fauna might be made. He is helped by a sense of the atmosphere of place that pervades his larger landscapes; and by a knack for the felicitous epithet—an inspiration, Howells remarked, "for the right word, and the courage of it, so that though in the first instant you may be challenged, you may be revolted, by something you thought uncouth, you are presently overcome by the happy bravery of it." Both appear in "The Rain-crow:"

> Can freckled August—drowsing warm and blonde
> Beside a wheat-shock in the white-topped mead,
> In her hot hair the oxeyed daisies wound—
> O bird of rain, lend aught but sleepy heed
> To thee? When no plumed weed, no feathered seed
> Blows by her; and no ripple breaks the pond,
> That gleams like flint within its rim of grasses,
> Through which the dragonfly forever passes
> Like splintered diamond?

Drought weighs the trees, and from the farmhouse eaves
The locust, pulse-beat of the summer day,
Throbs; and the lane that shambles under leaves
Limp with the heat—a league of rutty way—
Is lost in dust; and sultry scents of hay
Breathe from the panting meadows heaped with sheaves—
Now, now, O bird, what hint is there of rain,
In thirsty meadow or on burning plain
That thy keen eye perceives?

And this brief quotation gives little hint of Cawein's fidelity as a naturalist.

Something like this zest for nature we have had from the Merrimac and Hudson—why not more from the Wabash and Mississippi? In explanation of Cawein's narrow vein, the natural theory has been the thinness of the social world about him; he was driven to nature-verse by the same want of background and history of which Hawthorne complained at an earlier period in the East. But so great is the modern Western solicitude for a poet to express its native social ideals and spirit that the theory hardly holds. What is the glory that is attributed to Riley? That his very sentimentality is the expression of a sectional attribute, that his verse is rooted in the soil by its dialect and content. Piatt's *Western Windows* were acclaimed because they looked out on real Western life. Hay's *Pike County Ballads* had historical truth. In reality, Western poetry has been less inclined to neglect history and life for nature than to do the opposite; and this tendency is today as strong as ever.

1914, December 19, Boston, *The Transcript:* The impress left upon American Literature by the late Madison Cawein. By *Edward J.O'Brien.*

The sudden death last Monday of Madison Cawein represents a loss to American literature greater in some respects than the actual poetic merit of his work might seem to merit, for he occupied a significant position as interpreter to the rest of America of certain aspects of life and nature in Kentucky which are rapidly becoming part of a lost tradition, though in their day they did much to influence our national letters.

The work in poetry of Madison Cawein is the most successful interpretation of the Middle South's feeling for nature that we have, if we except the novels of James Lane Allen, and they embody a spirit of imaginative fantasy which Mr. Allen's work does not always possess. It is now many years since Mr. Edmund Gosse hailed an English selection of Mr. Cawein's *Kentucky Poems* as one of the finest

portrayals of landscape that our letters could show. These poems, which probably represent Mr. Cawein's best feeling and expression, are the fine interpretation of a literary pantheism, which may have lacked subtlety, but which never could be said to be insincere in mirroring nature in its most shy and elusive moods. The beauty of wood life to Mr. Cawein meant a return to the old Greek feeling of nature worship, passionately voiced in the wind and in running streams. He felt the sympathy of trees, and made the reader feel the essential wood magic in all its secrecy, in a life peopled with dryads, nymphs and satyrs, cruel and kind alternately as nature is cruel and kind, and jealous of human challenge and invasion.

In all his work, implicit in his earliest volumes as well as in the very latest of his fairy plays and poems, the reader was conscious of a childish simplicity which forebore to question nature, and in the continuous search for reality in silent places tended to repudiate, perhaps unhappily for his creative vision, the human passions of his race and time. When these touched him as a man they seldom flowered in infectious poetry, for the contagion of his imaginative persuasiveness was ever reserved for wild life and quiet, secluded haunts.

If Mr. Cawein always sought fairyland, it cannot truthfully be said that he found it completely. The fairyland of his poetry is one of doubt and questioning, and the scientific spirit in its earlier manifestations which he never outgrew raised barriers of fact which he never succeeded in penetrating to his satisfaction. I remember a letter to me in which he said, apropos of a poem which he enclosed, that he believed in dryads and fairies but that he had never seen one, as if some apology were necessary for what he had seen imaginatively. He always desired to touch objectively the imaginative beauties of which he had so real a subjective experience.

This accounts for the sadness of incomplete achievement which is never absent from his best poetry, a kind of spiritual nostalgia which made him feel that he was born out of his age in a materialistic environment where the old gods might not live and fact continually warred on fancy. Mr. Cawein never revealed a creative imagination which could pierce satisfactorily through the mists of material substance to the essential verities which lay behind them. But his fancy was incomparable and well-nigh inexhaustible in its romantic fecundity. In Kentucky he found an individual landscape which he could people with his fancy, and in this kind of creation he was assisted by an absence of self-conscious environment which is now almost impossible of attainment in the populous countryside of the older countries, by reason of which the passionate nature-poet is so rare in England and our own eastern seaboard today. His peculiar service to our literature was two-fold; he represented our wood-life adequately and sympathetically in charming landscape with a fine

sense of proportion and detail and he stood to the Middle South as a cultural symbol of attainment, which prompted poetic ambition and inspired in many others notable poetic fulfilment.

In the latter capacity, his life in Louisville made him the chief spokesman of Kentucky's literary aspiration, and his comparatively recent election to the National Institute of Arts and Letters reaffirmed this distinction happily and in no uncertain terms. That it was his desire, if not his happy achievement, to express adequately the human striving of our national consciousness toward an adequate democratic fulfilment, the ode published this year in the *Proceedings* of the National Institute bears conscientious witness.

Mr. Cawein's poetry was woven compact of illusion. But it was an illusion of the poet's weaving rather than of the nature which he sought to glorify. He was always a little self-conscious in his attempts at imaginative persuasion. As his work grew older with the years, from the early volumes of a quarter of a century ago to the volume entitled *The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road*, issued this month, it would almost seem a pageant of the seasons, opening with the fresh, confident pipings of spring, maturing with the growth of the season into the fine luxuriance of summer, which insensibly ripened toward the end into the mellow, calm and thoughtful beauty of Indian summer, suggestive in its fine poetic flavor of much the magic of his early spring.

One could never place his poems in a New England setting. They are too accurate in their landscape features for that, and they possess a luxuriance of growth which is alien to the hardihood of our northern climate. His poetry is the poetry of Kentucky, and when he would desert it for fairyland, we find that his fairyland has a Kentucky landscape. Although he saw beauty lightly if lovingly in his earlier work, in his later volumes there was manifest a striving toward a deeper reading of earth than American poetry had previously produced, so that his work took on qualities of reflection and sobriety which made it seem all the more actual in its poetic expression of natural relations. Nature was alive with personalities for him always, but latterly these personalities were invested with their peculiar God-like attributes in a manner which suggested no longer the early blind worship of his heart.

The poet's animistic feeling was closely akin to that of nature's other passionate interpreter in our day, Algernon Blackwood. Like Mr. Blackwood, he felt a passionate need of expression for the worship of beauty which possessed him, and this perhaps accounts for the unhappy facility and frequency of his work. Few American poets suffer more from overproduction, and demand so rigorous a selection of poems to define their position. His *Complete Poetical Works* were issued a few years ago in five large volumes, and since then he has added several volumes to them, all possessing qualities of high distinc-

tion, and all suffering from indiscriminate inclusiveness. It will be a service of considerable importance to American poetry to cull the best of his poems in a single volume, and thus give his work a chance of a much wider audience than it has hitherto been able to achieve. This is to be said in spite of the previously edited volume of selected poems, which is now obsolete, though entirely adequate for the period which it represents.

No estimate of Mr. Cawein's personality and achievement would be complete which neglected to call attention to the poet's fondness for children, whom he endowed with much fairy poetry written from their point of view. His sympathy for children was evinced in his very latest volume, which is entitled *The Poet and Nature:* What He Saw and What He Heard. It is designed to encourage a love of poetry in children by appealing to their natural sensibilities as they walk through the woods and fields.

Madison Cawein earned well the esteem of his generation, and was ever a generous friend to poets and poetry, as well as to literature in its other many-sided aspects. He aimed to be representative, and achieved leadership. Of the many poets Kentucky has produced, some of whom are of considerable distinction, he is the man who will be longest remembered in association with his native State. For he occupied as definite a relation toward it as Whittier occupied toward New England or Joaquin Miller toward California.

His imaginative spirit was akin to Keats' in its sensuous apprehension of reality, but it had qualities of American homeliness which were essentially individual to him, and he never outgrew the fine adventurous self-reliance of the pioneer. Seen in critical perspective by the generation which follows ours, he will probably be adjudged one of the fine interpreters of a vanishing spirit in an otherwise materialistic age.

1914, December 26, London, *Athenaeum:*

Mr. Madison Cawein, whose death is announced in the New York *Nation* of the tenth instant, was one of the most prolific American poets of the day, and produced over twenty volumes. His work was especially appreciated in his own State of Kentucky. His *Kentucky Poems* were introduced to the English readers by Mr. Gosse in 1902, and recently his own selection of his verse was published with a foreword by Mr. W. D. Howells.

1914, December, New York, *The Poetry Society of America Bulletin*:

Since the publication of the last *Bulletin* the Society has suffered a great loss in the death of one of its truest poets and most distinguished charter members, Madison Cawein. Mr. Cawein was

distinctly the creator of his own field. From the publication, in 1887, of his first little volume, *Blooms of the Berry*, he had made himself the intimate, almost mystic comrade of nature. "God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear," might be said of him as of Abt Vogler. He had the ecstatic sense of the visible world; the mystery of it, the marvel of it, never left him. Beauty was his religion and he spent his life learning the ways and moods of nature and declaring them in poetry rich with imagination. He had the naturalist's eagerness for truth and one might explore the Kentucky woods and fields with a volume of his poetry as a handbook and find the least-regarded flower minutely and exquisitely celebrated. In his most affluent fancy his eye never left the fact and the accuracy of his observation gives his nature work a background which adds greatly to its value. Not only the phenomena of nature absorbed him, but the tiniest creatures shared in his sympathy and love. The tree-toad and the rain-crow inspired his two most perfect poems, unless it be the twilight moth, gnome-wrought of moonbeam-fluff and gossamer, a poem catching in words that delicacy which words almost profane.

Mr. Cawein was in New York for the recent session of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and attended the last meeting of the Poetry Society. His evident ill health was a matter of concern to his friends but no one was prepared for so speedy a termination to a life so rich in beauty and service. For Mr. Cawein's character was one with his art; he had a genius for discovering excellencies and nothing gave him so much joy as some fine achievement on the part of his fellow poets. Indeed a gentler, truer, more generous spirit than that of Madison Cawein could hardly have been found and his life will always be a cherished memory to his friends.

The Executive Committee of the Society passed the following resolution: Whereas, the death of Madison Cawein, a charter member of this Society, has brought grief to all friends of poetry, be it therefore, Resolved, that the Poetry Society of America express its deep regret for this great loss to literature and the personal grief of its members at the departure among them of a man whom they loved.

1915, January 1, Chicago, *The Dial*:

Madison Cawein, who died December 8, 1914, at the age of forty-nine, was a poet richly endowed with the gift of interpreting nature in verse. The aspects of nature presented in his verse were those of his native State of Kentucky, where he lived all his life. Exuberantly productive from his early manhood to the time of his premature death, Cawein published more than a score of books of verses. Eight years ago a *Complete Edition* of his poems, which was published with an introduction by Mr. Edmund Gosse, required

five substantial volumes. Since then the additions to his poetic produce have been considerable. A selection of his poems with a sympathetic preface by Mr. William Dean Howells was recently published.

1915, January 2, New York, *Collier's Weekly*: KENTUCKY HAS LOST HER POET.

In the passing of Madison Cawein, one of this country's sweetest voices is hushed. Cawein shared the lot of earlier Southern poets in never achieving a nation-wide popularity. Sweet Sixteen did not paste his verses in her scrapbook, ardent undergraduates did not quote him, clubs of idle women never searched for his concealed meanings. Neither did national topics nor pulsing human passions move him to such quick response as did Nature—the world of birds and bees, of apple blossoms and wood violets. He was a child of the Wordsworthian tradition. But, as Mr. Howells once said, though his landscape might contain no human figure, it "thrilled with a human presence." In seven lines Cawein summed up a large part of his own philosophy [From "Epilogue" *Minions of the Moon*]:

> Could we attain that Land of Faerie,
> Here in the flesh, what starry certitudes
> Of loveliness were ours! what mastery
> Of beauty and the dream that still eludes!
> What clearer vision! Ours were then the key
> To Mystery, that Nature jealously
> Locks in her heart of hearts among the woods.

In the flesh he came close to attainment of that enchanted domain. In the spirit he still leads on toward those starry certitudes.

1915, January, Chicago. *Poetry—A Magazine of Verse:*

The death of Madison Cawein, which occurred on the eighth of December in Louisville, is a deep grief to his many friends and admirers. Born at Louisville in 1865, he was still a young man when Mr. Howells' warm greeting of his first book of verse gave him an authoritative introduction to American readers. Since then he has published many small volumes, which were united in 1907 in his *Complete Poetical Works* (five volumes). Three years later Mr. Howells reaffirmed his early praise of the poet in an introduction to a volume of selections.

The Death of Cawein

This is not the moment to attempt a critical review of Madison Cawein's work. Many of his poems have been much quoted and dearly loved, and time, no doubt, will select a few for permanent honor in the anthologies of American song. Meantime we can only regret his too early death, and recall the gracious charm, the fine gentleness of his character. *Poetry* is fortunate in being able to offer to its readers one of his most recent poems, "The Troubadour."

1915, January, New York. *The Writer's Bulletin:* MADISON CAWEIN.

One day in the early past summer, the editor of *The Writer's Bulletin* came to her office to find two poets awaiting her—Clinton Scollard, an old poet friend, who had brought Madison Cawein, of Louisville, Kentucky, to make a call while visiting in the city, being briefly in New York to attend a gathering of poets. It was pleasant to meet Madison Cawein, a man of small, slight stature, with eyes that twinkled as though a sense of humor was not lacking in the poet's make-up, a face of sweet expression, a hand-clasp sincere, and a friendliness for all who followed his craft that showed itself plainly as he chatted of his work and the work of other poets.

Now Madison Cawein has left us. Since the last issue of the *Bulletin* went to press we have received news of his passing on. Madison Cawein did not live to see a bound copy of his latest book of verse, just now come from the press, bearing the double title of *The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road*, the latter part of the title being that of a poem which first appeared in the May, 1914, issue of *The Writer's Bulletin*. In this last book of Madison Cawein's there are poems representing his earlier work as well as those of his riper art, and so much that is personal as to constitute a poetic autobiography.

Madison Cawein was one with the spirit of nature, following her understandingly everywhere, loving every living thing, seeing with eyes eager for truth. In "The Morning Road" perhaps the poet shows more of that subtle sense of things half hidden from mortal eyes than in any of his poems. It is the very essence of the mysticism of nature. We here reprint this lovely poem for the benefit of those true poetry lovers who may not have seen the poem when we first presented it:

The Morning drew a shawl
  Of rosy lace around her,
And by the wood's high wall
Stood smiling, bright and tall,
When I, who heard her call,
  Went forth and found her.

Upon the sun-kissed hill,
And in the vale below,
She laid a daffodil,
Golden and chaste and still,
And on the water-mill
A rose of snow.

She said: "At last you've come,
And left the world's carouse,
The palace and the slum;
No more shall soul be dumb;
I'll show you your new home,
A pleasant house."

She took me by the heart,
And led a magic way,
By paths that are a part
Of Faeryland, and start
From the forgotten mart
Of Yesterday.

And when we'd gone a mile,
She pointed me a place
Where overhung a smile;
And on its sill and stile
A promise, without guile,
As of a face.

And in the doorway there,
A baby at her breast,
One stood, quite young and fair,
Peace, with the golden hair,
Peace, that knows naught of care,
But only rest.

I knew at once 'twas she,
For whom all mortals long,
Who with Simplicity,
And Faith, that's sweet to see,
Dwells, guarding constantly
Her child named Song.

She bade me enter in;
Sit by her quiet fire;
Forget the world of din,
And, safe from hate and sin,
With her and Song to win
My heart's desire.

The Death of Cawein

1914, December 12, *Louisville Evening Post:* [*Current Opinion*, New York, February, 1915: "There are gains for all our losses." The death of Madison Cawein is a distinct loss to America—he was still in the forties—but a death that inspires such a beautiful elegy as the following, by Miss Anderson, published in the *Louisville Evening Post*, cannot be viewed as a total loss.] "MADISON CAWEIN, 1865-1914," BY MARGARET STEELE ANDERSON.

The wind makes moan, the water runneth chill;
I hear the nymphs go crying through the brake;
And roaming mournfully from hill to hill
The maenads all are silent for his sake!

He loved thy pipe, O wreathed and piping Pan!
So play'st thou sadly, lone within thine hollow;
He was thy blood, if ever mortal man,
Therefore thou weepest—yea, and thou, Apollo!

But O, the grieving of the Little Things,
Above the pipe and lyre, throughout the woods!
The beating of a thousand airy wings,
The cry of all the fragile multitudes!

The moth flits desolate, the tree-toad calls,
Telling the sorrow of the elf and fay;
The cricket, little harper of the walls,
Puts up his harp—hath quite forgot to play!

And risen on these winter paths anew,
The wilding blossoms make a tender sound;
The purple weed, the morning-glory blue,
And all the timid darlings of the ground!

Here, here the pain is sharpest! For he walked
As one of these—and they knew naught of fear,
But told him daily happenings and talked
Their lovely secrets in his list'ning ear!

Yet we do bid them grieve, and tell their grief;
Else were they thankless, else were all untrue;
O wind and stream, O bee and bird and leaf,
Mourn for your poet, with a long adieu!

1914, December 16, *New York Sun:* "In Memory of Madison Cawein," by Clinton Scollard.

[In a letter to me Mr. Scollard, commenting on the following poem, wrote: "As we bade one another good-bye in New York Madison said 'Till Spring, Clinton, Till Spring' * * * and a few days later I heard of his death."]

Ah, who, ah, who may understand
The secrets veiled from mortal eye?
But yesterday I held his hand,
And said, "Goodbye!"

"Goodbye till Spring!" And now, and now,
When no flowers bloom, and no birds sing,
And wild winds sway the barren bough,
For him 'tis Spring.

Beauty he worshiped as a creed,
Of life the ever vital part;
He held to it in word and deed,
In aim and art.

His spirit was as pure as air;
His nature tender and yet strong;
And all things lovely, all things fair,
Live in his song.

But yesterday I held his hand,
And said "Goodbye!" Ah bitter sting!
And yet I know, in some far land,
With him 'tis Spring!

VII

THE CAWEIN FAMILY

Dr. William Cawein, father of Madison Cawein, was born in Mühlhofen, Rhenish Palatinate, Germany, December 11, 1827; about 1853 he came to Louisville, direct form Germany, and died in Louisville, March 7, 1901. He was a son of Daniel Cawein and Catherine Bangert. Catherine Bangert was a daughter of Jacob Bangert and Anna Maria Herancour. Anna Maria Herancour was a daughter of William Herancour, a granddaughter of Paul Herancour and a great-granddaughter of Jean de Herancour who emigrated, in 1685, from Paris, France, to Mühlhofen, Germany, where many of his descendants still live.

Daniel Cawein and his wife, Catherine Bangert, were the parents of eight children, all of whom were born in Mühlhofen, and all of whom, except Jacob and Anna Maria, emigrated to America:

1 Jacob Cawein, who married Minnie Nutzloch.
2 Anna Maria Cawein, who married Henry Bantz.
3 John Cawein, who married Louise R. Stelsly, and among whose children were Mrs. Louise (Charles G.) Roth and Mrs.Ida K. (George W.) Bardin. Charles G. Roth was the father of Charles G. and John C. Roth.
4 Dr. William Cawein who married Christiana Stelsly, and among whose children was Madison Cawein.
5 Philip Cawein, who married Lena Miller.
6 Daniel Cawein, who married Julia Stelsly; they were the parents of Frederick W. Cawein and Mrs. Rose (William) Osborne.
7 Eva Cawein, who never married.
8 Elizabeth Cawein, who married Robert Rissie.

Mrs. William Cawein, mother of Madison Cawein, was born June 22, 1839. She lived in Louisville practically all of her life, and died in Philadelphia, March 19, 1911. She was a daughter of John G. Stelsly (or Stelsley) and his wife, Rosina, natives of Swabia, Wurtemberg, Germany. *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography,*

published in 1898, says: "Madison Cawein's maternal grandfather was a German officer of cavalry who served in Napoleon's later campaigns, and afterwards, when the last determined effort was made to lift the French yoke from the neck of Europe, under the King of Wurtemberg. On his honorable discharge from the army, he emigrated to America, with his wife, and lived first in Ohio and Indiana, and later in Louisville, where Mr. Cawein's mother was born." Mr. and Mrs. John G. Stelsly were the parents of seven children. It is said by some of their descendants that the oldest of the Stelsly children was born in Germany, and the others in Ohio or Indiana. Another version has it that all of the children were born in America and that the younger ones were born in Kentucky. According to Madison Cawein's version his mother was born in Louisville:

1 Catherine Stelsly, who, after the death of her first husband, George F. Sigel, married William M. Walker.
2 Louise R. Stelsly, who married John Cawein.
3 Carrie Stelsly, who married John Kohlepp.
4 Christiana, or Christina, who married Dr. William Cawein, and among whose children was Madison Cawein. After the death of Dr. Cawein she married J. Henry Doerr.
5 Jacob Stelsly, who died in 1854, aged eleven years.
6 Julia Stelsly, who married Daniel Cawein.
7 John Stelsly, who married Carrie Wunch.

Dr. William Cawein and Christiana Stelsly, the parents of Madison Cawein, were married in Louisville, November 22, 1855, by Reverend Charles L. Daubert, with George Jacob Stork and Josephine Freyhoefer acting as groomsman and bridesmaid. Thus three of the Cawein brothers married three of the Stelsly sisters. Dr. and Mrs. William Cawein were the parents of six children:

1 Lula R. Cawein, born February 16, 1857, and died in infancy.
2 John Daniel Cawein, born 1858, married Laura Hickson, died 1916; no children.
3 William Conrad Cawein, born 1861, never married, died 1919.
4 Dr. Charles Lee Cawein, born 1863, who married Emily Girdler, and who are the parents of Charles G. Cawein.
5 Madison Julius Cawein, born March 23, 1865, died December 8, 1914; married June 4, 1903, to Gertrude F. McKelvey who was born December 8, 1873, and died April 16, 1918. They were the parents of Preston Hamilton Cawein who was born in Louisville March 18, 1904, and whose name was officially changed, in 1917, to Madison Cawein—Madison Cawein II.
6 Lilian Louise Cawein, born 1867, married John F. Behney, died 1912; no children.

VIII

A POSTHUMOUS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In his letters to his friends Cawein reveals intimate glimpses of his personality and of his life and works. Those here published—some quoted in full, others in part—are arranged in chronological order and presented under the arbitrary caption, "A Posthumous Autobiography."

Cawein kept no copies of letters he wrote, nor preserved any data pertaining to them. Furthermore, having destroyed, given away or otherwise disposed of practically all of the letters he received, there remained very little to indicate with whom he had corresponded. In order to procure some written by him an open appeal was made through the columns of the Louisville press, *The Bulletin of the Poetry Society of America*, *Poetry—a Magazine of Verse*, and *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. These published notices, supplemented by personal inquiry among his friends or their literary executors, resulted in the submission of more than 400 of his letters. A perusal of them showed that they touched on practically every important act and angle of his life known to me through other sources. The letters submitted may be far from the total number written; they nevertheless offered ample material for the compilation of an autobiography. It is quite probable that more letters would have served simply to add to the sidelights, or to verify and amplify some of the facts here quoted.

Cawein little suspected that by writing a little news to this or to that friend, or by giving some comments on this or on that subject, he was, month after month and year after year, for twenty-eight years, recording material, much of which would be assembled and some day published.

No one, as far as is known, preserved all of the letters received from Cawein. Robert E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis, kept about 200, but it is evident that he did not save all. Their correspondence began in July, 1893, when Mr. Gibson wrote regarding some of his own poems. A few years later the two men met for the first time, and thereafter frequently visited each other. They carried on a more or

less active correspondence up to the time of Mr. Cawein's death—a period of about twenty years. They were the truest of friends. Mr. Cawein had many admirers, but if any one among them may be said to have set him upon the highest pedestal, Mr. Gibson is that one. Mr. Gibson was a native of Missouri and spent most of his time in St. Louis. He was born in 1864 and died in 1917. For many years he was an official of the St. Louis City Insane Asylum. He wrote several books of poems. Many of his poems were submitted to Mr. Cawein before they were offered for publication. The discussions pertaining to them form a considerable part of their correspondence. Only a few of Mr. Cawein's criticisms and comments on Mr. Gibson's poems are here quoted; these are typical of the many others. Had Mr. Gibson preserved all of his letters and kept notes on his conversations with the poet, a complete life of Cawein, in all probability, could have been compiled based on these two sources alone. More than one-half the correspondence here quoted was written to Mr. Gibson.

Mr. Gibson's collection of Cawein letters contains not only the largest number, but is also the most complete in the sense that he saved a greater percent than any other person. Less than about one-third are missing. From the standpoint of completeness every collection known to me has its own peculiar features. The John Fox, Jr. collection extends from 1888, its beginning, down to about 1894, although the two men exchanged many letters after that year. On the other hand there are no letters to James Whitcomb Riley earlier than 1897, or about five years after Mr. Cawein began writing to the Hoosier poet.

The intimacy that existed between Mr. Cawein and the persons to whom he wrote can be judged by the contents of the letters, but not by the numbers here noted—except in the case of Mr. Gibson, to whom he wrote the greatest number and the most intimate letters. For example, Clinton Scollard, of New York, one of his best friends, is represented by only one letter, Dr. Henry Van Dyke, Eric Pape and Edmund Clarence Stedman by only a few, and Edmund Gosse by none at all. Mr. Cawein seldom wrote to his friends in his home town, for spending most of his time in Louisville and its immediate vicinity, he saw them often. Nor are there any letters to Mrs. Cawein, before or after her marriage.

Before he met or began to court the girl who became his wife, he sent a number of love poems, or rather letter-poems to some of his young women friends. It would seem quite probable from his ardent imagination and poetry that he also wrote a few love letters in prose. None, however, has been submitted. Furthermore, no person interviewed by me recalled ever receiving from the poet what might be termed an attempt at a love letter in prose. A number received letter-poems that evidently were intended as love notes expressing personal

admiration for the persons to whom they were sent. Telephones were not in general use until about the year 1895, and the writing of long and short messages, on any and all subjects, was therefore a common practice. During the ten years following his graduation from high school, 1886-1896, he called on many of his girl friends. His calls, I infer, were about as numerous as those of any other normal young man, but his written messages were either an expression of admiration in the form of verse, or a serious letter in prose on the subject of literature. No early notes or letters, other than the few here quoted, are known to have been preserved. One is led to surmise that most, if not all, of his early notes were prompted far more by an interest in the promoting of poetry than in the making of love. The adage that "every man has had more than one love affair" applies to Mr. Cawein. He himself wrote in the Questionnaire prepared for Mr. Thum that he had had "several love affairs," but only "one supreme one." The indications are that it was in his poems and letter-poems—not in his prose notes or letters—that he gave expression to the love that dwelt in his heart. Many of his early published poems show he had more than a passing acquaintance with Cupid. With the exception of a few there is nothing to indicate to what persons these love poems were dedicated.

Mr. Cawein was thirty-two years of age when, in 1897, he began his first courtship with Miss Gertrude F. McKelvey, a girl eight years younger than himself, and to whom he was married in 1903, after overcoming various rivals. If she received any letters from him—other than a few notes relative to engagements—they were not preserved. She, however, saved eighteen of the poems that were written on his personal stationery, in his own hand and dedicated "To Gertrude." All were published in his books within a year or two after they were presented to her.

For the benefit of the reader who may wish to study the poet as a lover through the poems that are definitely identified as some written to the girl who became his wife, their titles and dates are here given.

1897: November 16, There Was a Rose; December 7, Carissima Mea. 1898; January 29, Why Should I Pine? February 2, When Lydia Smiles; March 29, Witnesses; April 20, The Artist; April—, Will You Forget; May 6, In May; May 13, Restraint; May 26, Words; June 11, Reason; August 26, Evasion; September 21, Her Portrait; October 3, Transubstantiation; My Lady of Verne. 1900: March 12, Reed Call for April; August 20, Love and Loss. 1901: Meeting and Parting.

All of Mr. Cawein's early letters and some of his later ones are signed "M. J. Cawein" or "Madison J. Cawein." His first four books and his poems published in newspapers and magazines previous to about 1891 include the "J" in his name. When he was about twenty-

six years old he discontinued using the "J" in his name as a writer. This change was made at the suggestion of William Dean Howells who called his attention to the fact that there would be more euphony and a stronger brevity for the public effect in the name "Madison Cawein" than in "Madison J. Cawein." He always retained the "J" in his signature to business documents.

This posthumous autobiography is compiled from letters selected from among those written by Cawein to the following persons:

Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Boston;
John F. Behney, Philadelphia;
Mary E. Cardwill, New Albany, Indiana;
Frederick W. Cawein, Louisville; [Indianapolis, temporarily];
Madison (formerly Preston H.) Cawein II, Louisville;
Dr. Henry A. Cottell, Louisville;
Mrs. Lillian Sweet Ditto, Louisville;
Mrs. M. P. Ferris, New York;
Bert Finck, Louisville;
John Fox, Jr., Red Oak, Ky. and Big Stone Gap, Virginia;
Robert E. Lee Gibson, St. Louis;
Leigh Gordon Giltner, Eminence and Lexington;
J. Russell Hayes, Swathmore, Pennsylvania;
William Dean Howells, Boston and New York;
Thomas S. Jones, Jr., New York;
Mrs. Richard W. Knott, Louisville;
Anna Blanche McGill, Louisville;
Walter Malone, Memphis;
Harriet Monroe, Chicago;
Harrison S. Morris, Philadelphia;
Ethel Allen Murphy, Louisville;
Charles Hamilton Musgrove, Louisville;
Eric Pape, Gloucester and Manchester, Massachusetts;
John L. Patterson, Louisville;
Harvey Peake, New Albany, Indiana;
Cale Young Rice, Louisville;
James Whitcomb Riley, Indianapolis;
Jessie B. Rittenhouse, New York;
Jenny Loring Robbins, Louisville;
Theodore Roosevelt, Washington, D. C.;
Algernon Rose, Authors' Club, London;
Charles G. Roth, St. Paul;
Lucien V. Rule, Goshen and Louisville;
Clinton Scollard, New York;
Hubert G. Shearin, Lexington and Los Angeles;
Mrs. Elvira Sydnor Miller (Wm. H.) Slaughter, Louisville;
Mrs. Fanny Stone (F. V.) Smith, Louisville;

Edmund Clarence Stedman, New York;
Mrs. Laura Stedman (George M.) Gould, Atlantic City;
Ivan Swift, Little Traverse Bay, Michigan;
Edmund W. Taylor, Frankfort;
Charles Hanson Towne, New York;
John Wilson Townsend, Lexington;
Mrs. Alicia Keisker (Albert) Van Buren, Louisville;
Henry Van Dyke, Princeton, New Jersey;
Mrs. Charlotte O. (J. L.) Woodbury, Louisville;
Stark Young, Austin, Texas.

It may be well to record the names of persons who in response to the open appeal or a personal note reported that they had received a few letters from Cawein, but had misplaced, lost or destroyed them. In their notes they praised Cawein and manifested an interest in this effort to compile a book on his life:

J. Bernhard Alberts, Louisville; Henry Mills Alden, Metuchen, New Jersey; James Lane Allen, New York; Young E. Allison, Louisville; Margaret Steele Anderson, Louisville; Matthew Page Andrews, Baltimore; William Archer, London; George A. Babbit, Brownsboro (six miles from Crestwood), Kentucky; Mrs. Emma Hanson Bartmess, Yonkers, New York; Robert W. Brown, Louisville; Mrs. Ida Cawein (George W.) Bardin, Louisville; Mrs. Evelyn Snead (Ira S.) Barnett, Louisville, Henry Adams Bellows, Minneapolis; Arthur Christopher Benson, Cambridge, England; Mrs. Samuel J. Boldrick, Louisville; John Burroughs, Roxbury, New York; George Lee Burton, Louisville, Richard Burton, Minneapolis; Mrs. Emma N. Carleton, New Albany, Indiana; Dr. Charles L. Cawein, Louisville; Florence Earle Coates, Philadelphia; Irvin S. Cobb, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Douville Coburn, New York; Timothy Cole, New York; Josiah Henry Combs, Hindman, Kentucky; Ingram Crockett, Henderson, Kentucky; Mrs. Katharine Whipple Dobbs, Louisville; J. Marvin Eddy, Louisville; Maurice Francis Egan, Brooklyn; Edmund H. Eitel, Indianapolis; Mrs. Sara Teasdale (E. B.) Felsinger, New York; William H. Field, New York; Mrs. Lida Waters (Charles Alexander) Fiske, Louisville; Hamlin Garland. New York; Marion Forster Gilmore, Louisville; Mrs. Hester Higbee (William) Geppert, New York; Abbie Carter Goodloe, Louisville; Edmund Gosse, London; John P. Grant, Louisville; Charles T. Greve, Cincinnati; Edith H. Griffiths, Ocean Springs, Mississippi; Louise Imogen Guiney, Oxford, England; Ralph T. Hale, Boston; Credo Harris, Louisville; Mrs. Theodore Harris, Versailles, Kentucky; Will S. Hays, Louisville; Anna Logan Hopper, Louisville; W. T. H. Howe, Cincinnati; Robert Underwood Johnson, New York; Edward

A. Jonas, Louisville; James B. Kenyon, New York; Joyce Kilmer, Larchmont, New York; Mrs. Hortense Flexner (Wyncie) King, Louisville; Dr. Henry H. Koehler, Louisville; Andrew Lang, London; Richard le Gallienne, Rowayton, Connecticut; Mark H. Liddell, Louisville, and Lafayette, Indiana; Edwin Carlisle Litsey, Lebanon, Kentucky; Amy M. Longest, Greenville, Kentucky; Sam McKee, New York; Mrs. Anna M. (John F.) McKelvey, Louisville; Edward J. McDermott, Louisville; Josephine McGill, Louisville; Isaac F. Marcosson, Louisville and New York; Edwin Markham, New York; Virginia May, Louisville; George Meredith, London; Mrs. Alice Meynell, London; Joaquin Miller, Oakland, California; William Vaughn Moody, New York; David Morton, Louisville and Morristown, New Jersey; Meredith Nicholson, Indianapolis; Alfred Noyes, Princeton, New Jersey; Thomas Nelson Page, Washington, D. C.; H. H. Peckham, Hiram, Ohio; Herman Rave, New Albany, Indiana; Lizette W. Reese, Baltimore, Maryland; Mrs. Abby Meguire (Neill) Roach, Louisville; Edwin Arlington Robinson, Peterboro, New Hampshire; Harrison Robertson, Louisville; Henry C. Semple, Louisville; George T. Settle, Louisville; Frank Dempster Sherman, New York; Frederick F. Sherman, New York; Mrs. Hattie Bishop (J. B.) Speed, Louisville; R. C. Ballard Thruston, Louisville; Adrienne Thum, Louisville; Patty Thum, Louisville; William W. Thum, Louisville; Ridgely Torrence, Xenia, Ohio and New York; Mrs. Jessie Lemont (Hans) Trausill, New York; W. P. Trent, New York; Mrs. Rose M. de Vaux-Royer, New York; W. H. Venable, Cincinnati; Lewis A. Walter, Louisville; Henry Watterson, Louisville, and Robert Burns Wilson, Frankfort, Kentucky.

It may be well to record also the names of persons to whom personal notes were written asking for letters and other data, but from whom no replies were received:

Bliss Carman, New Caanan, Connecticut; George H. Ellwanger, Rochester, New York; Nicholas Vachel Lindsay, Springfield, Illinois; Edgar Lee Masters, Chicago; Edward J. O'Brien, Bass River, Massachusets; Arthur Symons, Wittersham, England, and Sir William Watson, London.

Only such letters, or parts thereof, that in my opinion bore directly or indirectly on the poet's history and his interest in literature, were copied. The selections made are presented verbatim. Personal and trivial matters are omitted. With few exceptions no letters contained statements of a strictly private character. Subjects presented are given in full; omissions do not bear on what precedes or follows. All letters are in Cawein's own hand, and, unless otherwise indicated, were sent from Louisville.

They are in the form of chats written in a free conversational style; and, being a serious-minded man, he treated practically all subjects, in a more or less serious manner. In their simplicity of style and sincerity of purpose they are unique. They reveal the story of his aspirations and achievements and of his realized and unfulfilled hopes, and show that his life was one of hard and constant work linked with joys and sorrows. They bring many of his friends to us. They tell the story of his life. Among many other things they are evidences of his interest in and encouragement of other writers, especially unknown writers, who submitted their MSS. and books of poems to him.

It is not purposed to discuss any of Cawein's letters, nor the various bypaths into which they lead. It may be well, however, to comment on the fact that his earliest, so far known, was written about two weeks before he finished high school, and that in it he reveals the poetic within him and consciously or unconsciously charted the literary life he actually pursued up to the day of his death.

1886, May 30.

Miss Fanny Stone: You may have some dim recollection of a certain youth, who, after undergoing the form of an introduction, was kindly granted the enjoyment of your company for some few hours. That youth, whether his face remains pleasantly or unpleasantly in your mind, whether his memory be agreeable or otherwise, takes the liberty of addressing to you a few lines(?) challenging the censure of a frown, or the approval of a smile, but in hopes that it may be the latter.

My dear Miss Stone, after enjoying the harmony of your company at the before-mentioned picnic [High School picnic in Central Park] and being pleased with the gentleness of your manners, the openness, I might say the frankness, of your countenance, in an idle moment, contrary to all the forms of etiquette, I have undertaken the writing to you of a sort of social letter, perhaps, as I have remarked, to while away an hour, or to make an acquaintance so happily begun more enduring. I am trusting to the gentleness of your disposition for the pardon of my boldness in this, as I remarked, breach of etiquette, and for the smothering of all censure which may arise. After having made such excuses and begged the indulgence of your kindness to what may appear merely dull and trite I launch into the body of my letter.

From the neighboring church I hear the hymn swelling Godward in all the holiness of devotion. It is Sunday. A languor steals over my senses, such a languor as that was that hushed the brooding soul of the mighty Byron when on Lake Lemon mid the Alps in the storm and in the night, when "from peak to peak the rattling crags among

leapt the live thunder" he cried out to the angry tempest, the bellowing mountains and the rainy night,—"Most glorious night! Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be a sharer in thy fierce and far delight—a portion of the tempest and of thee!"

That last line [eight words] is majestic, beautiful and sublime. Think of being a portion of the war of the elements and riding on the living lightnings, mid the shoutings of the thunder. But such is not for me; my feeling is quite different, one of an indescribable listlessness, the opposite of that given by the bard just quoted: I seem floating on the odor of the roses, honeysuckles and syringas that quiver around me as I write at the open window. Such I feel a mere portion of the universe a dancing sunspark wand'ring mid the million leagues of profound space, a pulse of existence, an atom in a world of ether, a grain on the far rolling shores of a majestic sea.

Has it ever been your lot, Miss Stone, when beholding the mighty sun slowly setting behind the purple hills of the West through long ribs of clouds that bar the horizon, how gorgeously they become tricked in glorious and fanciful raiment of airy hues—gold, burning gold and silver, opal, ruby, emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper on a wide flashing slope of sapphire—emblem of the transit from the darkness of one world to the beauty and light of another? Of course I am not a preacher and never intend being such; do not for a moment suppose from my letter I make any pretensions to the clergy. I am but a youth who is the devout worshiper of a god that plants his footsteps on the waters, and breathes in the tempest; I am one who knows but the church of nature, whose dome is the everlasting forests, whose columns are the columns of mighty trees, and whose aisles are the far and fair vistas of wild flowered woodlands. With me the clash of parties and the world's confusion pass unheeded. I am a disinterested spectator. You read and think I am strange; I suppose I am, but I am a lover of solitude, and hence I despise baseball, etc., and can you blame me? Nature has few enough worshipers, don't you think so? Some must turn aside from the wordly pleasures to the pleasures scattered profusely at the feet of man and cull; shall nature waste the fragrance of all her roses on the desert air? I hear your faint "no,"—and bow submissive. Watch nature and you will learn to love her, to marvel, as I do—at her workings from her passage as the daisy-spangled beauty of Spring fresh in her new green gown to the spotless ermine of ice-bearded Winter. But stay—you must excuse me again, for I have spoken such as I have spoken in reverence of the day.

You deem me peculiar, and so I am. I have my fits of melancholy and happiness, perhaps, just as you have, only they may be more decided and bold in my case than yours.

For instance, I do not think that you would weep at hearing a soft, sad and haunting piece of music breathing sorrow, despair and death in its every note; I do not think that you would weep, at least

not materially but spiritually, as I would—my soul might weep whereas the rhythmic passion would have but little effect on the external physical body. Music is one of the greatest pleasures or passions with me, as, perhaps, it may be with you. I have often picked up a shell from the sea-side and laying the delicate pinky labyrinth of its pearly mouth to my ear listened to the rush of a "mystical melody," and at such a time my brain has shaped its song to such a rhyme fashioning love, disappointment and despair, despair such as finds rest only in the grave:

A nymph rose from the sea,
Dim, oozy locks had she
Pushed back by diadem of sparkly foam,
Wherein there shone three pearls
Full moony mid her curls;
She saw full fair thro' ocean's moonlit gloom—
Ah, woe and woe is me!
My lover wantonly
This dripping syren stole to her deep home.

Thus spake my shell to me, and you if you care may take up any chambered nautilus of your collection of shells and hear the same sad refrain if you choose. The verse is original with me, for I thought why should this shell murmur unless there was some sorrow unspeakable, inexpressible, that weighed down the dim recesses of its soul and waned the blush that tinged the beauty of its lips; and so I unconsciously wrought the rhyme which I subject to your decision whether it is appropriate or not, and you must let me know, verbally or writtenly.

I cannot say why I have written to you. Perhaps it may be simply to unburden my thoughts, and that you would be the most fitting receptacle for them. My letter, I hope, will find favor in your eyes now that your school is closed and there is nothing to mar the serenity of the soul. I hope that it will serve you the pleasure of a few moments as it has served me the happiness of a half hour, and that under favorable conditions you will reply.

Sincerely yours, Madison J. Cawein.

[Mrs. Fannie Stone Smith in an interview with me, said that when this letter was written she was too young to receive boy callers and therefore did not answer it, but thanked Mr. Cawein when, a few weeks later, she met him by chance on the street.]

1886, September 28.

Miss Elvira Sydnor Miller: Your unexpected letter was indeed a surprise to me—an agreeable surprise—to say nothing of the pleasure

afforded in its perusal. I must thank you again and again for the kind wishes expressed, and feel only too happy to know that my poor verses have, perhaps unmeritingly, found approbation in your eyes, an approbation of which they well may feel proud. But in your letter, you, I think, expressed somewhat of displeasure, or not so much pleasure, in my verses on the myths of ancient Greece and Rome, as in my latter two. Such a dislike is not unnatural; as these myths have been so hackneyed that the trituration of centuries of authors has about worn the fabric to a tissue through which one may behold the baseness.

To all Americans, however, poems or sketches of their own country, their own manners, customs, etc., their own men and women, as you have remarked, are more preferable, for the bare reason that such are more original in a novelty which is alien to the Old World. That which is most original will survive the longest; and the sources of wild beauties of our own country are myriad, hence, why should we, like mendicant friars, trudge begging among the misty abodes of Europe, gathering up the same old materials gathered up a half century ago to combine them in the same old use in which they were combined fifty years ago? This is absurd!

We may turn to the rising—or rather risen—poet of Kentucky—Robert B. Wilson:—here we may behold the subtleties that lie dormant all around us as they appear when laid upon the anvil of his intellect and subjected to the sledge of genius. But, however this may be, one, who has delved in the classics as I have—surely, it is true, superficially—may find them at times very enticing and fascinating, and wielding a power over you like that of the wand of Prospero. Hence at times I have found myself seated scribbling about the same old worn-out pitiable puppets that Homer and Virgil wrought at, and about which a hundred successive bards have written, especially the English, of whom we may mention Dobson, Lang, Gosse, etc. Tennyson and Longfellow touched them occasionally, but not to sully the whiteness of the Parian as many, myself included, minor bards after them have done, but to add additional beauty and grace to their pureness.

But enough. I suppose you weary of my lengthy letter, but I somehow forgot myself and have run on farther than I intended. I have found much to admire in every poem you have written and much to think over, and it is always a pleasure to me to happen upon one of your productions which I can enjoy as much as any poem of Ingelow, Browning or Rossetti, for "like angel visits few and far between" they are the more welcome and the more to be appreciated.

Hoping that your literary life, already so auspiciously entered upon, may develop beyond the expectation of your dreams—for what poet has not his dreams—I am, most sincerely yours, Madison J. Cawein.

1887, JUNE 20.

Miss Lillian Sweet: Forgive me if I again embarrass you with the present of a book; however, the mere fact that I wish you to enjoy the beauties of Tennyson as I have, will afford sufficient justification for the action. Read him and you will love him, for every poem is a precious gem. I glanced over the volume to refresh my memory a little; it is not complete, as you will perceive, but contains all of his happiest lyrics. The serenade in "Maud" haunts me still, especially that verse,—I have it by heart,—that says:

"Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done;
In gloss of satins and glimmer of pearls,
Queen Lily and Rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers and be their sun." * * *

1887, JUNE 28.

Miss Lillian Sweet: I am afraid that I astonished, if not offended you last Sunday with the vapidity and stupidity of my talk, and therefore must tender you an apology and crave forgiveness. I do not often get that way, believe me, and when I do it may be ascribed to obvious causes producing diverse effects—*e. g.* the atmospheres, especially when impregnated with a great amount of dust, or ozone, the aroma of trees or flowers, ideas which have just originated through recent readings, music and, last and most potent, by the presence of the other sex. You will admit, after this free and fraternal confession, that I am a most peculiar being, one who is not worthy of the favor conferred upon him in acquaintanceship, being, unwittingly however, not appreciative of it. Considering the circumstances, you, I know, will not wonder at this, ascribing much to the poetical temperament, if I have any, and to the ebullitions of a person who is rapidly becoming aged and grey-haired.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever," Keats says in his "Endymion," and in juxtaposition to this we may say that a thing of horror is a horror forever; so must it have been to you in my persistent return to the conversation concerning—shall I say it—yes, though it may astonish you as much as a shock from a Leyden jar might—frogs; you will forgive me though the word be as a sounding cuff on the hearing of your ears. Yet, I am foolish, you must admit this, Miss Lillian, I am exceedingly foolish, if not fantastic, at times. "Dear me! what a world we live in," I hear you exclaim; but don't you believe it, for seriousness isn't often a part of myself. I may not be serious now, for all you know, but merely oscillating between two

moods, sunshine and shadow, or fun and fear. You say you do not know how to take me, understand me? Well do not attribute anything I say, in any wise, to a philosophical mood, but to a poetical, that is to a mood of folly and senselessness. Now, I know we will understand each other perfectly, that is *deo volente* as Horace says, "God being willing."

But to come to the gist of this my letter after so much circumlocution in getting at what I wanted to say at first, but was afraid to;—you have no idea what a timid and fearful insect I am;—could I see you Sunday evening to church if you desire to go and the weather is clear; anyway could I see you Sunday evening, no preengagement precluding the pleasure? That is what I wished to say all along, but couldn't somehow, and it is out now like a gasp, and I am relieved, and suppose you are too. Sincerely, Madison J. Cawein.

1887, JULY 12.

Miss Lillian Sweet: * * * I took a long ride last night, at about half past nine, along with a few gentlemen friends from the Newmarket out Third, to the House of Refuge, in an open barouche and enjoyed the air and the starlight hugely. They twitted me somewhat, merely in fun, "pennyworth of wit," on my publishing a book—making me gray and my not finding time in the rush of business to attend properly to the proof. I have a tendency already to grow gray, but do not think that publishing will promote that tendency, although mother, some nights ago, dreamed that I left home and after remaining away for some time, returned white-headed remarking that I had published my book. Amusing!

The volume is now in the publishers' hands and I shall have it copyrighted today, and yours truly will by the first of November, perhaps, air his plumes as a knight of the pen before the public. If the work takes, it will be well; if it does not, I am content; for, as Aldrich says, I hold that "The sole reward of song is song." * * *

1887, DECEMBER 12.

Miss Elvira Sydnor Miller: You were kind enough at one time—not so far back—to write me concerning some verses published in *The Courier-Journal*. You do not know how I appreciated the favor and the motive which influenced you. My poor verses won your commendation; kindly accept the volume [*The Blooms of the Berry*], I mail you, in which, I hope, you may find much to please and more to make you remember one, who, if he has not as yet attained to anything that will wake a sympathetic chord in the breasts of humanity, at least possesses that largeness of poetical aspiration, but not inspiration, which, if only fostered with proper encouragement, might attain to such, but lacking it—failed. Sincerely, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, April 25.

William Dean Howells: I did not dream when I sent you my volume of verses, together with the letter which served, as it were, as an introduction of myself—that it would meet with such a favorable reception. Although I have remained silent to your note, believe me, it was from no lack of a desire to thank you, but from an idea, mayhap false, of my own unworthiness. Do not think me unappreciative! On the contrary, it has been a comfort to me in that dearth of literary encouragement which a young author's first work—especially in the line of verse—must undergo.

I do not know what made me forward you the volume; unless it was my admiration for yourself, which impelled me to grope out, as it were, instinctively towards and after one whom I thought could and would understand me and my aspirations. Yet, to speak the truth, I confess that I did not expect to make more than a transient impression on you.

Now, to infuse into my soul new zeal—that ichor of my inspiration—comes your most appreciative review in *Harper's* for May. I would love fondly to grasp your hand and thank you; thank you for your generous encouragement, not with words, for I am sure I could not, but by that magnetic discourse which soul holds with soul, so that you would not only understand but should also feel my gratitude. Sincerely yours, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, May 19.

William Dean Howells: You will forgive me for inscribing this my second volume of verses [*The Triumph of Music*] to you, although it is but a poor way of showing my gratitude for the generosity extended by you to my first endeavor. For I can imagine how contemptible to an author must appear all that false flattery of sycophants (among whom, heaven be praised! I am not), who would be literary.

My former volume was merely the offering of a school boy, written while yet attending High School and published after graduation, written between the ages of nineteen and twenty-two. Almost any one can perceive in it its youthfulness, hence my non-publication of an introduction explaining; such being entirely uncalled for. For I thought, why should I explain the earliness of these poems? Merely that I may win unmerited praise if unpraiseworthy! and avoid merited criticism as many do by printing a preface setting forth sedulously and painfully (to me I know) the precocity of their productions?

The volume I now forward you, and which is dedicated to you and your genius, Mr. Howells, with the exception of the first poem,

"The Triumph of Music," written at the age of nineteen or earlier, and which then consisted of from five to six hundred lines,—has been composed at odd moments, of nights and Sundays principally, when my position afforded me an opportunity of wooing the bashful Pieris.

Working as I do—an assistant in a large betting establishment here in Louisville, in other words in a gambling house, you can imagine what encouragement in associates and surroundings is mine to the encouragement and inspiration of poesy. God! how I have longed for a change, and to this end have toiled, crushing down from eight A. M. to nine and ten P. M. sometimes, that aspiration which will struggle uppermost and will not let me be; but to give entire way to its caprice were to sink into want and perhaps into beggary; so I try to parcel my time between work and poetry, and you have here the result of my last Winter's work. Read it and see what there is in it, but always remember that he who wrote it, wrote it, as it were, in "between races" and on "off days." Yours sincerely, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, JUNE 16.

Edmund Clarence Stedman: In the overabundance of poetry it was with trepidation that I forwarded you those two volumes which you—generously, contrary to all my anticipations—received so kindly. I allude to *Blooms of the Berry* and *The Triumph of Music.* You have been so kind! and I can do nothing to thank you but tell you I am thankful.

You can see that I am very ambitious; and I fear that my aspirations are at best too lofty to attain that culminating success, which will make me a poet. For, despite the general tendency and concern of the present in the direction of prose, when there is not so much attention and less remuneration given to one who devotes his time to verse, I am determined to continue in the latter during my life.

Do you think that in aspiration prayer is well, when the desire of the soul is like an insistent and persistent prayer? Yet, I have prayed and continue to pray for that influx of inspiration which God alone can grant. This may be a confession. I think trust and faith and prayer are well. I have tried to make my life such even this early in youth, for I am but 23 years of age and you see I have at least done something.

Do not think me melancholy. I am not. On the other hand I am often, I fear, too buoyant, although subject at times to morbidness and melancholy of short duration, occasioned principally by my surroundings and my position which tends by the association of low instincts, ideals and passions to wear the poetry out of me and leave

me nothing but despondency and weariness and that unutterable longing which only those who aspire know of. The clamorousness of nature and art with all their beauties calling out to me for attention and the interpretation of such cannot be easily unheard and set aside. I have hastily attempted somewhat, too much, perhaps, not in writing, I mean, but in publication; but you have said it is well, and for this encouragement let me thank you again; and if, as you say, there be anything in me that, with something to say, in time must sift uppermost *haec olim meminisse juvabit.* Most gratefully yours, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, JUNE 19.

Miss Elvira Sydnor Miller: I think that you do yourself an injustice in not admiring your first volume of verse, *Songs of the Heart,* which I have read with not a slight degree of pleasure. However, I suppose it is the same with all authors of rhymes, at least I have found it so. For often that first work of mine has become so distasteful to me that I have been again and again tempted to destroy the entire edition. Such moods were most frequent before the work had attracted any slight attention. I have discovered the unremunerativeness of verse, yet, with that discovery, have determined—indeed, it were an impossibility to do otherwise, since poetry is as much a purpose as a passion with me,—to continue in verse during my life. A poet need not care an iota for recognition during his lifetime; he ought to be more than satisfied if that recognition is allotted to him after death,—that is, a true poet.

I myself have entered upon a position in an occupation which is wholly alien to my nature and temperament; in fact, were it not for strongly exerted will power, a position that, through surroundings and influences would soon tend to annihilate all of the poetic in me,—simply to be able to publish my works by which I am certain to lose hundreds. No one will ever know, or could understand if known, the trying circumstances under which that last volume was brought forth. Yet it behooves all those who wish to rise above mediocrity, to aspire in the face of Fate and mount through work to that pinnacle of success which is granted to—how few! Sincerely, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, JUNE 21.

John Fox, Jr.: Walking on Fourth Avenue yesterday morning I saw in the window of a certain studio the photograph of a painting that struck me as something embodying that idea of my ideal of

which I have written, and of which I have, at times, also spoken to you. A beautiful female head crowned with a heavy tumultuousness of hair, reclining on perfect arms; such a face as one might endow an Oread with, wild and lovely, blending the immaculate elements of the spiritual with the virginal graces of the human.

I purchased it; and it has usurped the place of honor,—heretofore occupied by that comely Virginia authoress, whose works I have admired—above my desk. I would not have mentioned this to you had I not had somewhat in mind: The association of the poetical conception with the artistic; poetry sans philosophy; that is, simply as a thing of loveliness, pleasing the senses the same as a beautiful painting; color in poetry as in art; that school of which Keats was the founder; of which Tennyson is the master; to which effect I have endeavored in all I have written. For I hold that, where in poetry we are compelled to dig and delve after the secret thought and subtle beauties,—such poetry approaches more the domain of the philosophical prose, and pleases the poetic palate less than that which, clothed with an exquisiteness of words, surprises the ear with unexpected beauties and touches the soul with pathos.

When I saw the picture it was as if I had created it myself, as an illustration of my idea of my "Lalage," or of what that creature, which sang the youth on to death in "The Triumph of Music," was; leaning forward, godly, immortal, beautifully triumphant, wondering "with cold commemorative eyes" if such was sleep or death; vaccillating between tears and smiles, hope and fear; a creature of air, a sylphide being of dreams, substantialized in thought. This leads me on to tell you that, in the tendency of illustration in the creation of the beautiful through words as built up in poetry, every poem I have written has its illustration or illustrations in my mind, distinct, separate as in a gallery. *The Triumph of Music* I have embodied in a hundred paintings too ungraspable for the brush, too indefinable for word-description. One simple, but pathetic sketch for "Pax Vobiscum" and one for each line of "In Mythic Seas," etc.

Perhaps Dante had some such ideal conception of his Beatrice; Landor of his Aspasia in his "Pericles and Aspasia;" Spenser of his "Fairie Queene," ignoring the influence of Elizabeth; Swinburne of his Atalanta in "Atalanta in Calydon", with her cold, proud classic grace; Rossetti, of his Blessed Damosel; Tennyson, Enid, etc. I think it is only this influence of ideals that master the highest poetry; in such exists that divine afflatus which it is useless to endeavor to acquire if not innate, the influence of which develops that ethereal fascination which elevates the soul in the perusal of verse. Yet, I have at times wished that this desire of song were not of me; for, truly, it is at times as much of a devil of hell as, at others, of an angel of heaven; intractable and compelling, irresistible and assuaging; but, I am determined—nay, rather bound—to accompany, to wor-

ship this duality to the bitter end. That is the beauty which buoys up a true devotee of song—the inability to abandon its cruelty or its kindness.

My regards and remembrances of friendship to my very dear friends, your brother and Mr. Allen. Always believe me, sincerely, Madison J. Cawein.

1888, September 12.

John Fox, Jr.: Your ardor anticipates your anticipation, for I see by your last letter that you are expecting me Sunday or Monday [at Red Ash, Whitley County, Kentucky]. This is how I am situated. The Louisville Races commence Tuesday the eighteenth, and according to contract our pool-room closes promptly at noon. This allows me the remainder of the day to myself, and I have so managed with my brother John, that he has permitted me one week of unadulterated leisure, which you know how I desire to utilize. I shall leave Tuesday the eighteenth by the morning train and arrive—well you know when. I wish to see some of Kentucky and that is why I prefer the day for traveling. I am thrilled to start. Your very letters seem to bring me a snuff of the mountain winds * * * I seem to be there with you already. My loins girded for the storming of enormous heights, a pilgrimage up, up, through bars and belts of mist to frowning bluffs and ardent cliffs. * * * However, until I grasp your and your brother's hand I must say farewell. * * *

1888, October 32. [November 1.]

John Fox, Jr.: [Mr. Cawein was Mr. Fox's guest for one week. The following is from his second letter after the visit.] I can imagine how mournful and lonely the mountains are now. I can imagine the gloomy melancholy stamped on their Indian visages; the sadness of their weighty syllables when the wind moves them with gladless conversation. I suppose all those many torrents with which we, in our rambles, became familiar, and which we made the highways of our pilgrimages to those exalted shrines of worship—those castled rocks—have become murmurers of water that stammer and scramble through damning leaves and choking weeds.

I have been over on the Indiana Knobs every available Sunday and so have had an opportunity to study recondite nature in its most mournful and delight-instilling beauty. * * *

1888, November 28.

John Fox, Jr.: I am utterly thoughtless at present; having drained my brain as dry as hay, naturally I have to doze and wait for the rains of imagination to sodden this again ere I dare to subject it to another process of compression and drain.

I have finished my prospective volume of verse [*Accolon of Gaul*]—that is not finished it exactly, but have completed it to that perfection which my precocious mind fancies finished. To speak plainer—I have done all at my present age [twenty-three years], that I can hope to do, or ought to hope to do, with the subjects handled. The MS. is now ready and at any time I am so disposed I may place it in the hands of a publisher. So I hestitate. No one knows its defects as well as I know them; no one could remedy them better than myself, but, to confess, this is beyond my intellectual ability. It stands as it stands. If it is good it is good; if it is bad it is still good. I have worked very hard and have done my best; I have no fault to find with myself. Art for art's sake. Art is its own reward, say I. I am also utterly worn and tired out, and want to rest—to rest for at least a time— to read as a relaxation to my labor. * * *

How is our realistic romance progressing—almost ready for the publisher, I expect? John, why not put something into it that skips the Ten Commandments, eh? Your friend, sincerely, M. J. Cawein.

1888, December 14.

John Fox, Jr.: * * * This for you: The only way an author can keep those blue devils from devouring him is by fighting them—by fighting I mean hoping and working. You are not naturally of a lymphatic temperament, are you? Then hang it!—Why don't you hope? Put faith in your effort, and in faith you will certainly find consolation, hence energy and ambition. If you have no faith in your work now, work on it and infuse it with your own unquenchable *ego* and so develop faith and then *tandem victoriam.*

Sometimes I think I am too hopeful. My sanguine disposition humps itself too often to do and dare too much. And do you know that often I can hardly believe a moiety of the good that those eminent critics have said about my poetry,—for, if so, why are my manuscripts still returned from the magazines? I am led to believe myself a scribbler far overrated and praised. * * *

1889, May 15.

Frederick W. Cawein: Stick to your ideals through thick and through thin and if—as all of us poor worldlings are compelled to do—you have to slave for a little pelf, why the mere subdued pursuit of something above the minds of ordinary humanity makes one superior to them, and the lowly mind is always humble and conceding to the soul that has aspirations. Again, you know the mere creation of the beautiful, totally regardless of all remuneration, recompense or

reward, is sufficient reward to the acolyte. Enough! you know all this or ought to. The material is always more egotistical than the spiritual and is always presuming with the ideal which it tends to drag down and soil in the quagmire of necessity. The races are here and I hardly have time to think of, much less write of, things that I should like to write and think about, and even while I am writing here I am interrupted again and again. How is the landscape about your new abode [Indianapolis]? Artistic, dreamy, pastoral, idyllic? I cannot write a line more now, the importunities of the "betters" are increasing. Sincerely your cousin, M. J. Cawein.

1889, May 21.

Edmund Clarence Stedman: My last poetical venture, which you so kindly spoke of in your letter, had already met with so much caustic criticism, on the part of the critics from Boston to San Francisco, that I despaired of hearing anything at all, and especially of anything good of the work, on the part of the foremost critic.

Let me thank you for your letter which has alleviated, somewhat, these tribulations and that disgust for my art which, naturally, accrued to me through the conflicting reception of this last publication—also has turned the damper put upon my spirit and given flue to a renewed energy. If I was aware of the mistake I was making by publishing *Accolon of Gaul* before publishing it, I proceeded in an uncertain hope and a dogged determination either of succeeding or failing utterly: in that spirit of *sed quid temptare nocebit?* and have done neither one nor the other.

I, however, still possess youth, which is something; though there is time yet—much time to turn my pencil in the direction you suggest —the American field. Your friend, Mr. Howells, who has, as you say, bestowed upon me the accolade of literary knighthood, has been, perhaps, too kind and considerate of me as well as you have been. When I was laboring obscurely at verse making, with alternate fits of feverish hope and despair, I often envied those who were so fortunate as to possess such literary advisers and experienced friends as you and Mr. Howells are, and had any one foretold that, in time, I should claim you as such, I am certain I should have smiled at it as at a chimera; but, behold the whirligig of time has actually brought in its revenges and in my confusion I can only repay you with thanks. Most sincerely, M. J. Cawein.

1889, August 23.

Frederick W. Cawein: Your letter was most interesting from the fact, that you had something interesting to me to write about; I mean Whitcomb Riley whose acquaintance I really do envy you.

When you happen to see him again tell him that I am one of his greatest admirers and a new volume from his happy pen is always a treat to me. * * * You must try to get in with such persons as Riley, if possible, Fred, and it is possible for you. * * * I know you will make something out of yourself, because you have that energy and settled seriousness of purpose which that Power who gave will not suffer to go unrewarded. You must, if you will it, compel attention. And when you are worthy of recognition, as surely as the stars are eternal, you will get it. You are a great deal [two years] younger than I am, and through application towards a fixed point which [in your case] is art, who shall say that you may not even be higher than I am when you have attained the age of twenty-four.

I make frequent trips to our old haunts among the Indiana hills and always miss you. * * * The season of racing is in full swing East and West and consequently I have to suffer. * * *

1889, September 16.

John Fox, Jr.: * * * I have made the acquaintance of Young E. Allison lately, he whose story, as you are probably aware, is to ovature, through an early number of the *Century* ["The Longworth Mystery," *Century Magazine*, October, 1889], the gestic ability of another Kentucky champion's pen in the difficult list of modern literature, and I found him most interesting—particularly his conversation, which has a flavor entirely its own, and the ability of its wit is remarkably sparkling.

My friend, Miss Elvira S. Miller, has been quarreling with the Muse lately, and, in revenge, sits *vis-a-vis* to Prose who is whispering fairy tales in her ears. She intends to bring out through a Louisville publisher a book, I think called "Fairy Tales For Children" ["*The Tiger's Daughter and Other Stories*," 1889], somewhere about the holidays. * * *

As for yourself—what? As for myself—you know that my art is always aching in me and that I must work and not permit it to starve. It is my life. If the public escapes from the infliction of another volume of lyrics by Madison Jefferson (as the *New York Sun* is pleased to style me) Cawein next year I shall want to know why. * * *

1889, October 21.

John Fox, Jr.: * * * You could not have rendered me a greater favor than you did in bringing Wilson [Robert Burns Wilson] around. You should have prepared me beforehand; naturally I was a little embarrassed and perhaps showed it. I was more than charmed

with him. I like him very much. He is nobly made—physically as well as mentally; morally—I know nothing of him; however, if one be permitted to gauge that by what he has written, in that respect also he must be irreproachable. He more than satisfied my mental photograph of him. I had pictured him as somewhat older looking and found, on comparison, he was just the opposite. So sorry that you did not bring him around a little earlier. I can hardly forgive either of you for leaving as abruptly as you did. * * *

1889, DECEMBER 7.

John Fox, Jr.: * * * I suppose you have read Miss Higbee's [Mrs. Hester Higbee Geppert] story, "In God's Country," in the November *Belford's Monthly Magazine*, as every one seems to have read it. However, if you have not, procure the magazine at any price and peruse, and you will be amply repaid. The story is simply yet powerfully told, and is artistic. This novelette is simply beautiful. * * * Although a personal acquaintance of Miss Higbee I had never given her credit for so much talent. * * * You ought to know Miss Higbee and Miss Elvira Miller. * * *

1889, DECEMBER 23.

Frederick W. Cawein: * * * Art and literature are about at a standatill at present in Louisville; just the same old sing-song hocus-pocus it was at the time you left for Indianapolis. You are actually well out of it. A prophet is never appreciated in his own country; he has to gain admiration elsewhere before his own people acknowledge him. Really, I think you have improved wonderfully in your drawing. That little pen sketch of your room is excellent, and I do think that that room would not only make a studio, in all the artistic meaning of the word, but I do imagine that a poet might be able to dream wonderful dreams in it. I suppose you prevaricated somewhat on the decorations, etc. of the chamber, but at the same time hope that it really is as you pictured it.

All that is necessary to success, you know, is energy, hope and health, and with these three friends there is nothing that cannot be accomplished with time. I hope you have them. I enclose a V bill; it is a Christmas gift to you from me. Do not hestitate to accept it, and do not attempt to retaliate. I can afford it, you can not. Some day it may be vice versa. * * *

1890, FEBRUARY 10.

John Fox, Jr.: I have been suffering from rheumatism in my hand, hence my delay in answering yours of two weeks past. * * * I should indeed like to be with you where you are [Big Stone Gap]

but you know how I am situated. As it is at present, I shall not be able, even if you should discover some good investment, to invest. You will readily understand why. The publication of my present volume [*Lyrics and Idyls*] will require a great part of my bank account. You know already that it is only for this that I am a slave. Such is my passion—it would be impossible to philosophize one contrary wise. I am doomed or fated to it; it is more of a curse than a blessing —this fever of ambition! It was well for Cardinal Wolsey to charge and exhort Cromwell "to fling away ambition."—Could Wolsey have flung it away so easily previous to his fall as he admonished his friend to do after his fall? "By that sin fell the angels!" What of man then, crawling between heaven and earth? * * *

1890, March 12.

Frederick W. Cawein: * * * I shall mail you a copy of *Lyrics and Idyls* as soon as it is out—that is if you wish one. I think it will be out this week. I do not want to compel you to read poetry, for, as you know yourself, the age is most unpoetical; in fact, according to many English and American wiseacres, the Age of Poetry is past or rapidly passing, and that of sophistry and science about to usurp it. Alas! and woe are we! whenever the world comes to such a pass! Poetry is the balm of life. Without it all artistic temperaments are what? What, art? What, music? What, love? The most beautiful being that we have they would exile from the earth, and erect in her place an image of subtlety, scorn, cynicism and pedantry! What a defilement of the flower-strewn temple, the incense-breathing altar of the goddess of youth! What a profanation of our rose-bound divinity of light, truth and purity! Well, if it is to be so—so be it! But may I be dead, buried and forgotten when it is so! * * *

1890, March 19.

John Fox, Jr.: You talk about me being a gentleman of "infinite leisure" as compared with yourself at present! You are wrong, my dear John. For the last three weeks and more I have been a slave of infinite toil, and am suffering at present from the effects—neuralgia in my face—which is very painful. My brother John was taken down sick in February and it is only now that he is able to do his work. During the time that he was in bed all the work of this office, which is no small amount, devolved upon yours humbly.

I have not written a thing for upwards of three months and do not intend to, until I feel capable of doing anything I may be moved to write on, at full and free justice. That acceptance of your story

["A Mountain Europa" accepted by *The Century Magazine*, but not published until fall 1892] should have certainly inspired you with the fiery energy of a new endeavor. I know how I should have felt, and how I should have worked in the exultation of knowing that my *first* piece of work had proved available to and had been accepted by one of the foremost magazines in the United States. * * *

1890, March 25.

Frederick W. Cawein: I was very much gratified to hear that my last work pleased you. * * * The poem that you especially mention, "Among the Knobs," is commemorative of one of those many delightful trips we used to take among the Indiana hills, and I suppose you did not fail to recognize the locality which I have attempted to describe. Charlie [his brother, Dr. Charles L.] and I visit the place frequently and always find something new to admire or to bring away —flowers or fancies. * * * You are denied the broadening influence of the hills, the valleys and the woods, where you are now; for, if I understand you correctly, there are no such appealing beauties of nature in the vicinity of Indianapolis. Will [his brother William] is doing some very fine work in the way of water coloring. It is astonishing how much good one can get out of one's self when one is forced to apply one's self. He has not done any work in this way for years. * * *

1890, March 31.

John Fox, Jr.: In the first place you must know that everything is all right and all are safe at my house. The newspaper reports might lead you to believe otherwise. The tornado [in Louisville, March 27,] was horrible and the effects terrible.

I send you by mail today my last volume of verse—my last, may be, for some years. As I am disposed at present, it seems to me as if I shall never write another line. Why! Not because I am discouraged in any way, and not because I am satisfied with what I have done. It is because I am never satisfied with that which I have done; that my hope is not sufficient to my desire; my ambition overleaps itself. In other words, try how I will, work how I may, I shall never be able to attain to the eminence of those ideals which are ever illusory, not at my present age. Although I feel that I have not done sufficient serious work in poetry for one of my age, I feel again that I should cease writing for a while and permit my brain and nerve fibres to adjust themselves to a new endeavor. Many a man with less expenditure of energy and endeavor, not to speak of

vitality, with equal ambition, has made himself famous at twenty-five. I have not even made reputation enough after seven years or more of toil and hope, to get one of my poems into a third class magazine, not to speak of a second or a first class. Yet I believe this work, *Lyrics and Idyls*, is my best book. You might read it carefully and let me know if you agree with me.

If you can, try to call on Mr. Howells. I know that he would be pleased to meet you and that you would be delighted with him. He is about the only friend that I have there. He is my literary father.

Let me hear from you as soon as convenient. I shall await a reply with impatience. Always sincerely, M. J. Cawein.

1890, JULY 18.

John Fox, Jr.: If you have not yet been introduced to Rudyard Kipling as India, England and America, the last partially only, have, permit me to make you acquainted What do you think of a young Englishman raised in India being able to produce a work like these "Forty Tales?" A young man of twenty-four only, whose fame has been rapid in its rise, and from his work, I should say is liable to remain fixed, and most probably placed higher. Perhaps you have read the poem of "Yussuff" in *Macmillan's* or reprinted in the dailies; poems with a wealth of barbaric coloring and orientally dramatic to a degree—a great degree—well, that individual also is this twenty-four-year old Kipling.

Directly after you left Louisville—or probably a week after you left—J. W. Riley was here as the guest of Young E. Allison. I had the pleasure of meeting him, through the kindness of Mr. Sherley, at a dinner given in his honor at the Sherley Place. Riley is an original and I like him immensely. He, too, is carried away with this young Englishman from the land of the Brahmin and the faquir.

Has the heat suppressed you or are you writing another novelette? As ever, sincerely, M. J. Cawein.

[A facsimile of this letter appears on pages 192 and 193.]

1890, JULY 26.

William Dean Howells: The "Study" of the August *Harper's* has interested me more than usual this month. Heretofore, I do not hesitate to say, the newspaper and other reviews have worried me not a little, but with time have gradually grown hardened to them. I often wonder why certain papers seem especially hostile to works of mine; and why they incessantly persist in lugging your name (as

a kind of indulgent *O et praesidium et dulce decus meum* individual), insulting you and me at the same time—with a notice of a volume, which you had not even dreamed existed, much less seen; all this because you were audacious enough to speak well of some previous book of mine. Thanks to the kindness of the "Study" I now understand. The pleasure to them, it appears, lies in the bald fact that not being able to control and dominate the ideas and the true literary acumen of a far higher authority, they still possess the power to disagree openly with that authority, making that difference public and of weight through the columns of some large city daily.

Enough!—I have been enjoying your last two volumes, *A Hazard of New Fortune*, and *The Shadow of a Dream*, very much—very much. Especially the latter appealed to and impressed me; containing, as it does, happy flights of poetry beyond me; pastel paintings in delicate prose far more vibrant with moral beauties and sensitive to a degree with color than much of the highly praised modern poetry. Your touch is felicitous and pregnant with exquisite pathos in such a description as that of the neglected garden by the sea; then again dramatic to suspense, anxious suspense and fear, in such a death scene as you make it the tragic stage of. I do not know of any one of your later books which does not portray this same peculiar poetry expressed in your own masterful way, and preaching and teaching at the same time something better. Most sincerely yours, M. J. Cawein.

1890, September 9.

William Dean Howells: I will take the liberty of seeing you within the next week or so, perhaps—that is, if I am so fortunate as to find your residence. I have desired so much to meet and to know you better; and, if nothing prevents shall start on the fifteenth or the sixteenth of September for Boston, as I presume you reside there. My journey, of course, owing to business matters here—must be very brief; and should I not meet you I shall be more than disappointed and have to regard my trip accordingly of no use. Believe me, ever sincerely yours, Madison J. Cawein.

1890, September 10.

Miss Mary E. Cardwill: Your more than interesting letter to hand. I regret that I shall not be able to see you personally soon, as I intend starting Monday or Tuesday on a short trip to Boston and New York. In the meanwhile I opine your article [on me now being written for the *Indianapolis News*] will be completed and perhaps published.

[Continued on page 194.]

THE
NEWMARKET,
239 & 241
THIRD STREET,
LOUISVILLE, KY.

Louisville, Ky. July 18th 1890

My dear FOX:—

If you have not yet been introduced to Rudyard Kipling as India, England and America, the East partially, only, have, permit me to make you acquainted. What do you think of a young Englishman raised in India being able to produce a work like these "Forty Tales"? a young man of twenty four only, whose fame has been rapid in its rise, and from his work, I should say is liable to remain fixed, and most probably placed higher. Perhaps you have read the poems of "Yussuff" in "Macmillan's" or reprinted in the dailies; poems with a wealth of barbaric coloring and

THE
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Louisville, Ky. ..... 188...

~~[illegible]~~ orientally dramatic to a degree — a great degree — well, that individual also is this twenty-four-year-old Kipling ×.

Directly after you left Louisville — or probably a week after you left — J. W. Riley was here as the guest of young E. Albeon. I had the pleasure of meeting him, through the kindness of Mr Shirley, at a dinner given in his honor at the ~~[illegible]~~ Shirley Place × Riley is an original and I like him immensely × He too is carried away with this young Englishman from the land of the brahmin × the jaguar ×

Has the heat suppressed you or are you writing another novelette?

As Ever Sincerely M. J. Cawein

Madison Cawein

As to myself there is very little to be told. I was born at Louisville on the 23rd of March, 1865, making my present age just twenty-five. After a course in the public schools of Louisville—which course was not noted for its precociousness—the High School received me with open arms. This was in 1881. I graduated therefrom in 1886, without honors, but with the useless degree of A. B. I wrote a great deal while attending High School and a year thereafter published *Blooms of the Berry*. The notices were few, the sales of the book, less: * * * I am now engaged on a book, or single long poem, I don't know which, as it is kind o' producing itself. This, I think, I shall call Days and Dreams. It consists of many lyrics—a lyrical romance, as it were—centering around only two characters, a male and a female. I don't know when I'll complete it; don't know whether or when I'll publish it. * * *

1890, SEPTEMBER 22, BOSTON.

Miss Elvira Sydnor Miller: Well, here I am in the big East, the petted and pampered favorite of Mr. Howells and his vis-a-vis. I spent a day and a night and a half a day with the Howells last week at the beautiful sea-side resort at which they are stopping—namely the Prescott House. From the veranda of this hotel the ocean stretches its deep cerulean welter uninterruptedly to Spain and Ireland. Oh, the changing colors of its moods and vessels—sloops and mackerel boats—that shift and shine their snowy sails in the tenuous light of an autumn sun. Yesterday was Sunday; John Fox and I again visited the Howells at the Prescott, and staying over to tea with them, beheld that "light that never was on land or sea" by star light and by moon beam; for the waters seemed to be envious of the brilliancy of the skies and each seemed to be trying to outdo the other in being beautiful. The full tide sparkled and flickered with phosphorescence as it thundered mellowly against the dripping breakwaters of the beach, and the sails of the far off boats glided like so many phantom barques along the pure purple of the horizon. Egg Rock raised an amorphous mass far out crowned with the glowing ruby of its light house.

The Howells have treated me royally. They have overwhelmed me with favors and cards and letters of introduction to the most famous literary men, such as Lowell, Alden, Gilder, etc. The afternoon of my arrival at the beach as their guest they took me driving over to Little Nahant. Here be the swell summer residences of the Nabobs of Boston, select and seclusive and beautiful beyond description. For hours we watched the surf singing inward and feathering like the blown white hair of so many racing Tritons on to the sand; for an hour we marked the rocks spouting their foam,

the fishermen's nets crusted with barnacles, the showering sun beams, the lights that shifted as the mood of the ocean changed, the boats that beat inward and the sails that gleamed outward. Then we passed Longfellow's summer home, and so home to sit on the veranda to talk on things that are or are not; things that were and things to be.

I leave for New York tomorrow afternoon. I am being spoiled up here; I must get home before my head is turned. Very sincerely yours, M. J. Cawein.

1891, October 16.

Edmund Clarence Stedman: One line from you is encouragement. Thank you for the score of encouragements breathed in the twenty lines of your charming note. How unfortunate that I did not know you were at home when I was East! I have just returned from Boston where I saw Mr. and Mrs. Howells. Prior to that trip I was in New York for five days. During my stay there I met your staunch friend, Frank D. Sherman, and during the time of my call you were an important factor in the conversation. I desired so much to meet you and to thank you for your early encouragement. I was under the impression, however, that you were still away from the city—rusticating in the mountains or by the sea shore.

When I am in the East again I shall not fail to grasp your hand and hear your voice. Most sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1892, May 21.

Mary E. Cardwill: * * * I was in Florida for over a month (March) and have been very much occupied since my return. I have not been well for some time, but as soon as I feel better I intend dropping over to see you—perhaps next week. * * *

1892, November 5.

Edmund Clarence Stedman: You have made me very happy with your new book [*The Nature and Elements of Poetry*]. Although I had great pleasure in reading the lectures as they were published in the *Century*, my pleasure is greater now that I have the book from you personally, and I am already deep into it again.

After reading your first lecture last night, I turned to the fly-leaf on which you have written the presentation line to me. I assure you that I appreciate above everything else the one word that you have written there concerning myself. If I am really and truly a *Poet*, as you say there, there is no other God-given gift that I have

so longed for or striven for as this which is pre-eminent. I thank you a hundred times for your kindnesses, not only present, but past, and these are also present with the present.

I had hoped to see more of you when I was in New York, but the Fates adjusted otherwise for me. Some day I, too, may take up my abode in the great city and then shall we not know each other better? Yes.

I shall have a new book of poems out next year, which I know will justify much that my best critics have been led to hope for by my early books. I, too, have said many times that with me "poetry is not so much a purpose as a passion." This will make my sixth volume in seven years—you perceive how the passion holds me—like a *vice.* Very gratefully and sincerely yours, Madison Cawein

1893, JULY 8.

R. E. Lee Gibson: [Mr. Cawein's first letter to Mr. Gibson.] Permit me to thank you for the "ponderous folio of rhyme" which you were so kind as to send me. I have enjoyed the fourteen sonnets more than I can tell you. Indeed, if you care anything for my opinion, I should like to tell you that there are few, or none, better, so far as I have observed, published from year to year in the current magazines by poets of established reputation. Usually I have no patience with the sonnet, being too artificial a form for me, and I am always impatient of control in respect to writing poetry. However, I have enjoyed yours and have read them over two or three times. "Life," "Fate" and "Night" are finely conceived and flawlessly finished. In every one, however, there is the true ring of the golden metal. Accept my congratulations and thanks, and believe me, very sincerely yours, Madison J. Cawein

1894, MARCH 17.

Walter Malone: * * * What are you doing with yourself these hard times? Interspersing your law practice [in Memphis] with poetry or vice versa? You can talk about your professions or businesses, but literature—especially poetry—is harder than the entire combination, and more unsatisfactory in its results, both ideally and practically. I get more discouraged every day. Try as you will, dream, drink or go to the devil the end is one and the same—nothing for your pains or your pleasure. The world is teeming with talent, prose and poetical—and especially the latter,—that is just naturally *begging* to be heard, and to be loved; that offers its productions at a sacrifice and more than frequently, at nothing, in order to be heard, and yet be refused by publishers as well as magazine editors. I

think there is no other field more crowded with excellent talent than the modern field of literature. Genius alone is lacking. Genius, that only could make itself heard above this many mouthed Blatant Beast of literature; and, alas! and woe is me! that genius is not mine! To wake up some fine morning and find myself to be famous, or, the next best thing, to *feel* that I deserved to be famous, in the knowledge that I have produced something that will live in spite of the critics and the vituperations of reviewers. Enough! * * * As ever your sincere friend, Madison J. Cawein.

1894, April 4.

Walter Malone: Tell me: shall I have several of my books sent to the Memphis Authors' Club of which I am now an honorary member?—or what can I do to show that I appreciate the honor they have seen fit to bestow upon me?

My dear Walter, you know how much I should like to be with you when Riley is in Memphis! but things arrange themselves so that I shall be kept very busy during the ensuing two months or more, not literarily—but in the way of business. Some money I have falling due, several thousands, which I see a way of investing advantageously [in Kentucky lands] will absolutely demand my presence here as well as my closest attention. * * * I should like to be in Memphis not because Riley will be there as your guest, but for the great pleasure of again seeing you and grasping your hand and thanking you for your interest in me and my work. * * *

1894, August 20.

John Fox, Jr.: * * * Have not been doing anything except correcting proofs, etc. for the past month or so, and having a good time with the girls, with one especially. They will, I hope, in time supersede my poetical aspirations which have been and will, perhaps, continue to be a curse to me. I have not absolutely written anything for nearly six months now.

Let me congratulate you on your last story in *The Century* ["A Cumberland Vendetta"]. It is great. Your fame and position in letters are assured. You have no pricks to kick against now, my boy. * * *

1894, September 27.

Walter Malone: Thank you very much for the volume of Timrod. I had given up in despair of ever procuring a copy of that fiery singer of inspired battle lyrics, sonnets and songs. How he does stir the blood in you and make you yearn, vainly indeed and alas! that you might have been one in the Lost Cause. I searched

every book store and was unable to even discover a bookseller who knew of him. At last I ordered a copy from New York, but was informed that the book was no longer to be obtained. Imagine my chagrin! A thousand thanks for the volume. I have read, it from the memoir to the last poem. I can not thank you enough. * * *

1895, JANUARY 11.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Let me thank you for the kind words you had to say about my last book, *Intimations of the Beautiful.* * * * A letter like that one of yours helps one much; as much, almost, as a critically favorable notice appearing in one of the first magazines by some distinguished author and critic. * * *

1895, MAY 30.

Harrison S. Morris: * * * I think that, at your kind suggestion, I shall run up to Philadelphia in October and see you if it is only for a week or so. I am sure it will do me good in many ways, especially in a literary way, and I need it badly that way, God knows! There is so little encouragement to literary endeavor here at home. So few people read poetry or verse now, that it looks like time wasted to apply yourself to its creation. I don't know but what it is the same the world over. Only the poets of the present day, more or less, read each other. Very few outsiders interest themselves, and if such do, it is not frequently that they do so understandingly. * * *

1896, MARCH 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * You flatter me very much in naming your first baby after me [Mary Elaine Cawein Gibson]. A sweet little girl, too! I should have liked very much to have seen her before I attempted a poem in her honor. However, I have attempted one, feeling sure that all I could say in it could not be otherwise than true of her; but it might have been said better had I had an opportunity of seeing my little namesake before penning the enclosed ["Baby Mary"]. * * *

1896, MAY 16.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * It is such appreciation as yours [in which *Undertones* is praised] that encourages me to keep on writing and helps me to do better and better. * * * I feel that what you said comes fresh and sweet and satisfying from the well-spring of your heart of hearts. * * *

1896, JUNE 3.

Harrison S. Morris: I am just in receipt of your beautiful poem, "Ad Matrem" [later published in *Lyrics and Landscapes*] for which I wish to thank you. There are lines in it which in beauty, faith, sorrow and hope, surpass anything I have recently read in English elegiac poetry. Stanzas III and IV and VII strike me as being particularly fine in thought, expression and metaphor. All in all it is a poem of deep feeling and love, and a worthy and imperishable monument to the memory of her [mother of Mr. Morris] who was "laughter-loving, true" and "wise," "in nature's shy humanities." * * *

1896, SEPTEMBER 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have been away a great deal this summer, both to the country and to different cities. Indianapolis was one of these, and I spent a pleasant day or two with James Whitcomb Riley there, and he spoke of you and your work very flatteringly. He writes me that his new book, *A Child World*—much of which he read to me in *MS.* when I was with him—was grinding in the press and would probably be out early next month. It is a beautiful poem and worthy of the author of *Afterwhiles*. * * *

1896, OCTOBER 29.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich: * * * Here in the South, if I do say so, there is very little encouragement extended to the writer; especially the writer of verse. We have to look to the East both for the appreciation and the pecuniary reward, which act as a stimulant to renewed effort; the former is usually a long time coming, the latter, in my experience, never does arrive. So, you will perceive, my labor is one of love and love alone. Therefore I hope that working thus unselfishly I may in time be able to accomplish something really excellent in poetry. Such praise and such criticism as you were kind enough to give my work, coming as they do from you, I need hardly say tend to smooth some of the roughness of my road to Parnassus. Permit me to thank you again for your praise and your criticism.

1897, JANUARY 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have received personal letters from many eminent writers regarding my last book: Thomas Bailey Aldrich, our most polished poet, Edmund Gosse, the English critic

and poet, Charles Dudley Warner, Hamilton W. Mabie, and Mrs. Louise C. Moulton, all writers of great ability and critics of much acumen, have written me the kindest words of praise about *The Garden of Dreams*. But none of them touched me half so much as your good letter did. I cannot tell you how much I prize it. You are continually heaping favors upon me, and I have none to reply with. I hope some day that you will give me an opportunity of responding in kind. * * *

1897, JANUARY 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Ever since the beginning of December I have been suffering from rheumatism in my shoulders and arms, wrists and hands which made it difficult, often impossible for me to write. I am some better today and thought I would take advantage of my present good condition to answer a number of letters that I should have answered some time ago. * * * I would advise you to send your poem ["The Healer"]—if you have not done so already—to some magazine, say *Harper's*. It is a lovely poem. * * * Why should not you try, and succeed as many unworthier ones have. If these poems are returned to you that signifies nothing. I have many of mine returned to me every year. You stand a chance of having one or two accepted, and every little helps, you know. * * *

1897, JULY 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: On the 8th I left for the country where I have been idling ever since. I am now at home where I hope to see you when you visit Louisville on the 24th. You anticipate too much, your estimates of my poor abilities is entirely too high. I fear that you will not realize one tenth of what you expect in me personally. However, I am sure that we shall always be good friends. * * *

1897, SEPTEMBER 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been working in a heavy-hearted sort of a way for the past month or so. You will ask me why, perhaps, and I shall tell you. You remember the love affair I told you about, and the letter which I wrote to her [a Louisville girl] advising her to marry the young man [living in the East] who had proposed to her. Though I was greatly pleased at such devotion as hers, I saw readily what was best for her. Two weeks after I last saw you [Mr. Gibson's first visit to Cawein, July, 1897] I received a formal note that she was married. I had cared much for her before

this, but after the irrevocable step was taken and she was lost to me, I cannot describe to you what I have endured, and endure in silence and without flinching. Hell has no greater torment, to my belief. I think I have done what was best for both of us. I may have done wrong in advising her as I did and compelling myself to give her up; but I think that I have done right. As it is, I am seeking consolation among my books and my other young lady friends, of whom I have many that are very charming. And at the present writing I find that my burden of woe is considerably lightened. I am starting for the Tennessee Exposition tomorrow, and am taking my mother and sister along with me. * * *

1897, December 3.

James Whitcomb Riley: I was about writing to you [their correspondence began in 1891] about your *Rubaiyat*,—having just finished reading it in the December number of *The Century*,—when your most beautiful book arrived. I treated myself to a re-reading of your fine poem in its exquisite dress, and now write you accordingly. * * *

In every way the book is one of the loveliest I have ever had the pleasure of handling or of owning. Outside and inside, from the delightful dedicatory stanzas, to "Tamain," from front to back, and then from back to front, it is perfect with the perfectness of perfection. The poem is characteristic of your best. It is in your happiest vein, and even without the beautiful raiment and adornments which your publishers have given to it, would have been sure of great success. As it is, in its sumptuous array, heaven knows how many editions you are doomed to exhaust.

My dear Riley, you don't know how proud it makes me feel, as if your success were my success, too,—to see how steadily you go on advancing and advancing, head and shoulders above them all. * * * You are our *greatest poet* now, and I do not see one withering bay-leaf in the green laurel which is so justly yours. Long may it continue to you, and you to us, is the wish of, Your grateful and admiring friend, Madison J. Cawein.

1897, December 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am sending you herewith a copy of *The Triumph of Music*, one of my earliest books, which I do not think you possess. It will amuse you, perhaps shock you, in parts, to see how imitative of Swinburne I was ten years ago, and what wicked thoughts I must have had. The greater part of this little book is contained, revised and re-written, in my *Moods and Memories*. You may be anxious to compare the originals with the re-prints. * * *

1897, DECEMBER 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your beautiful gift arrived yesterday and I don't know how to begin to thank you for the volume of *Tennyson's Memoirs.* It is a work I have been most desirous of having, but did not feel as if I could spare the money for it just at present, or even later on. It was too good of you to think of me so kindly. In fact, my private opinion is that you over-estimate my deserts, and think too much of me. I am not deserving of a fifth part of what you think I am deserving of. I have been reading eagerly in the volumes. To think of a man writing such verse as Tennyson wrote at such an early age, fourteen and twelve years! It is astonishing. And to note the noteworthy poems, from period to period, that he did not deem worthy of publication, almost makes one despair. The poems he suppressed would have made the reputation of an ordinary writer of the present day, like myself. Reading a work like this makes me feel too vividly the fruitlessness of my poor endeavors; makes me see too openly my limitations and my inability to ever even touch the lower hem of the robes of such art as was Tennyson's. He has set the standard of literary excellence in poetry so high that the coming generations of poets, not to mention the present little generation, will find it more than difficult, in fact impossible, to ever attain to such excellence, much less to surpass it. Shakespeare, Tennyson; Tennyson, Shakespeare: they are diversory names, and the greatest in the literature of the world. * * *

1898, MARCH 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Every year it grows harder and harder for me to get my work accepted by the big magazines. I am quite discouraged now, and have finally made up my mind to cease submitting things to them altogether. I lose faith in myself and my ability when poems I consider very good, as good as I can make them, are invariably returned by these great criterions of literature. Those which, on sending away I thought a great deal of, on being returned, rejected, are like beautiful women out of favor, entirely distasteful to me and suspected of many faults which I never dreamed of before. This is not good for me; it is not well; and so, all in all, I think it better I stop writing or stop sending to the magazines of the East. * * *

1898, MARCH 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Every line I write I feel. My muse is in deadly earnest. The things come to me in a flash and are written on the very spur of the moment, myself being almost unaware of the fact.

Your letter cheers me greatly. I thank you for your more than kind words, but can not help viewing my future as through a glass darkly—

> "The desire of the moth for the star,
> The night for the morrow,
> The devotion to something afar
> From the sphere of our sorrow,"

as Shelley says in one of his most exquisite lyrics.

However, I have some news of verse even in these times of agitation and disregard of poetry. Get the new English poet's small volume of poems, read it and, like myself, despair! Stephen Phillips is his name and the volume is simply entitled *Poems*. Read "Marpessa" and "Christ in Hades," two of the noblest pieces of blank verse that have ever been written since Tennyson's "Oenone," "Ulysses" and "Tithonus." They easily, in my opinion, stand longside of those in a certain respect and remind you of all the great masters, Dante, Milton, and Tennyson. I have read them half a dozen times, something unusual for me, you know. * * *

1898, March 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I was shocked to hear of the death of your father, and herewith tender you my sincere sympathy and condolence. Death is a thing that must come to all of us. Sorrow is the dim, sweet companion of Death. And without these two, how much less loved would the world be! It is they who give "the light that never was" to the "sea and land," that transforms them and beautifies them above the realities that they are, and makes them wonderful. * * * War [The Spanish-American War] is far from being a promoter of poetry of a peaceful character as this book's [*Shapes and Shadows*] verse is. Well, so be it. We are in fate's hands. Let her make or break us. Only I wish she would be less dilatory about one or the other. * * *

1898, April 22.

Harrison S. Morris: As you write in your letter of the seventeenth concerning the friendship existing between us, I heartily concur in everything you say, and will add this, that perhaps, as Theosophy teaches, besides this camaraderie there is also an affinity, subtle, secret and indestructible. Well, whatever it is, I know that it was your poems that first attracted me to you. Your work struck me as being perfect in many ways, individual and true. It is not necessary to say any more, I think; such a trinity speaks for itself, and could not help but impress one like myself who had made the art of poetry a study from his very teens.

I like the poems that you say you like in the volume [*Shapes and Shadows*]. As to the criticism you make regarding my pet "August" and the bee she holds to her "hushed ear," you evidently forget that it is August, the playmate of the bees, the birds and the buds, who is holding the bee! What bee would harm her! He would indeed be an ungrateful wretch, who, petted and pampered through her honeyed hours, would turn upon the sweetheart who caressed him. Moreover, she only holds him to her ear to see whether or not his hum be well in tune with the wind and the water, the heat and the drowsy scents of hill and wood and meadow, and the sleepy heat of her own blood. * * *

1898, April 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * You have always interested yourself so deeply in my work, and have expressed such great admiration for it, that I have been often at a loss how to show to you my appreciation of both. I have seized the opportunity of doing so, and dedicated my latest volume, *Idyllic Monologues*, to you, my friend. I think you will like the dedicatory stanzas when you see them. ["Foreword" or "To R. E. Lee Gibson"]. They are true of myself and of all poets of the present day; American poets, at any rate, and Southern and Western poets, particularly. * * *

1898, July 4.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been doing little or nothing in the way of verse, being totally stagnated and disheartened in that way by everything and many people—especially editors of magazines who return everything I think good, and into which I put much of myself. The "Afterword" of the *Idyllic Monologues* was the truest thing I ever wrote, and may prove the last thing I shall ever have printed. Transit, etc. * * *

1898, July 19.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: Your letter [from Gerrish Island, Maine], just received, has filled me with unsatisfied longings for the sea which, I am afraid, will have to remain unsatisfied. It brought into the torrid weather, we are now enjoying here, the foam-filled coolness of the Maine Coast, and actually, while I read it, I could almost feel the sea-wind on my eyelids.

But wood-fires in July! It seems incredible; and I must confess that I am afraid I am too completely a son of the South to be able to appreciate such an unnatural condition of affairs, so out of season, or to care for such when summer is so satisfying to me. Winter is always

long and dreary to me, and I am always only too glad when summer is here, and never dream of abandoning her winsome womanhood for the austere and barren manhood of the other. But the ocean—that is different! I envy your close communion with that; the wild shore, the shimmering distance and the long rolling thunder of the surf, full of suggestive melancholy and whisperings of forgotten wrecks, old as the sorrows of the world. * * * I have been reading a volume of Emily Bronti's recently, called *Wuthering Heights*. Perhaps you are acquainted with it? It pleased me as much, if not more, than her sister Charlotte's novels pleased me. I am haunted by this one particularly; and if I can secure a copy I shall mail it to you. Being a sad and ghostly tale, it would read well to a wild and dreamy accompaniment of the ocean. It is full of tragedy and ghosts. It will haunt you. * * *

1898, JULY 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: To say that I am disappointed in having your visit postponed until September tenth, is putting it very lightly. I had hoped to have you here during the hot weeks so that we might either take a trip up the Kentucky River, or to Rockcastle Springs in the mountains. I suppose I shall have to take the trip to the Springs by myself now if I go at all.

The tenth of September is over a month off still, and there is no telling what may turn up between now and then. I shall try to have everything arranged so as to be entirely at liberty then, and so at your disposal. If we can't go up the Kentucky River or to Rockcastle Springs we can pay a flying visit to my father's farm, just sixteen miles outside [east of] the city, and loaf and invite our souls there for a day at least. I shall be glad to see you at any time, spring, summer or fall; come whenever you can or are ready.

I am far from hopeful over my poetical future. I have horrible cases of blues, more frequent and more persistently clinging than ever. I recognize the fact that I have done my best work and that falls deplorably short of what I set out with the great hope of doing. If you care about reading a kind word about my work, although my smallest and least important book is the one that is considered, get the August number of *The Pall Mall Magazine* and read the article therein on "Recent American Verse" by William Archer, the eminent English critic.

By the way, I want to thank you for the magazine, *The Chaperone*, which contained a sketch and a portrait of you. Of all the poems quoted therein and all the poets considered, with the exception of Eugene Field, your poem and yourself were the best. I certainly mean what I say. Write to me whenever you can and remember that I am always, Sincerely your friend, Madison J. Cawein.

1898, August 16.

Harrison S. Morris: * * * Your sonnet on our late war with Spain is fine. It impressed me as being very strong and well worded. I have been looking for it in some magazine but in vain. I suppose the overwhelming amount of war-verse that inundated the country frightened you off, as it did me. Judging from the frequency of their work, Clinton Scollard and Robert Burns Wilson did more with their poetical bombardment to bring Spain to terms than Shafter and Sampson did. It was well for us to keep out of the way of their rapid-fire artillery and maintain cautious reserve and silence in our trenches. But really you should have published that sonnet; it was a very fine and dignified utterance. You did wrong to suppress it.

I hope you have not entirely abandoned the muse * * * It would be a shame to treat the sweet wench in this foul manner after she had bestowed such great favors upon you. I suppose, however, that you have not entirely abandoned her, but are still courting her in secret, and, no doubt, in time will let the public know. * * *

1898, August 16.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: * * * I visited, together with my cousin, Fred,—who went to make sketches for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad,—a new cavern, discovered some two or three years ago, about a mile and a half from the Mammoth Cave. It is called the Colossal Cave, and comes up in every detail to the adjective that described it. I never was so impressed in my life as I was by its tremendous domes and pits, two of them 172 feet deep, almost twice as deep as the "bottomless pit" of the Mammoth. Stalactites as big as houses, and stalagmites to correspond, and an infinite array, row on row, of dripping, eternally dripping, gypsum and lime-stone formations. Galleries of sparkling crystal, flower-forms, and jewel also. Waters falling from darkness into mysterious depths. Echoes, hollow as the fleshless voice of death; eyeless fish, craw-fish and crickets, with ghostly and supernaturally elongated antennae. Here, indeed, one might dream that devastation had dragged his earthquake bulk to die, and at some primordial period of unhistoried time, shaken with his last convulsion the ruins of the world about him. "Caverns measureless to man," where eternal darkness reigns. * * *

I am now exceedingly anxious to become better acquainted with Richard Jefferies. I know comparatively nothing of his works, having read more about him than by him. I sent you a little story of his published in *The Bibelot*, which you may find interesting as I did. Mr. Ellwanger, in his *Idyllists of the Country Side*, has a beautiful essay on his work, which, perhaps, you would enjoy reading after you return home from New England. * * *

1898, August 31.

James Whitcomb Riley: I want to congratulate you on the splendid notice of your work by Bliss Carman in *The Atlantic* for September. You are surely making your way among the best readers of poetry; and what I said a year or two ago,—after the death of Holmes,—is borne in upon me more and more with every new book by you—that you are our *greatest poet*, the worthy successor and equal of our greatest,—Longfellow, Emerson, and Lowell. In all respect and honor to you I take my hat off and proclaim that though not as learned as these, not having had the advantage of a college education as these poets of the East had—without their traditions and their positions in the society of scholars,—still you are their equal, against odds, in literary art; and in my estimation surpass them often in truth, imagery and music—winning, or having won, your way through your own efforts and inherent genius. The more honor to you, my dear friend. * * *

1898, November 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am glad that Charles H. Musgrove called to see you. * * * He is a fine fellow and, to my belief, an excellent poet, one of the best in our State, if not in the South. Read his great sonnet in last week's *Harper's Weekly* on the Red Cross Society. Nothing finer has ever been done in this country for a long time, I do believe.

As to my unworthy self, I have done nothing since I saw you [in Louisville] last September. *Harper's Magazine* recently took a lyric [fourteen lines] entitled "Transubstantiation," for which they paid me something like two dollars a line. It was an agreeable surprise, I assure you. * * *

1899, January 5.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been working away on my new book [*Myth and Romance*] and have added a number of new poems which I think far ahead of much I have already done. My poem "When Ships Put Out to Sea" appears in the January number of *The Truth*, with an illustration. "Old Homes," which I read to you when you were here last September, appears in the December number of *The Atlantic Monthly*. I shall also have a poem in an early number of *Harper's Magazine*. But what does it all amount to? They do not take my best. * * *

Madison Cawein

1899, JANUARY 30, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: I took the liberty of sending you a little box of kumquat oranges this morning not knowing but what you might be unacquainted with this peculiar fruit that is to be eaten skin and all. Now this is the kind of climate I can understand one seeking when the thermometer is playing hide-and-seek with zero away up yonder in Louisville; here where one can sit out on the piazza of the hotel and listen to the mocking-birds singing in the palmettos or the cherokee-rose vine; where the roses and the violets are blooming in the open air, and the mercury is in the neighborhood of seventy or eighty degrees. I cannot understand one's desiring anything better than perpetual spring or summer weather, except a preference for autumn—but winter! Deliver me from that wretched season of all seasons! And yet you and your mother seek it out, every year, up in Maine, and the Maine people come down here, seeking out summer when their state's program is winter. It is only a matter of temperament, however, and I did not begin this letter to find fault, but just to tell you that I endorse your sentiments, written me last summer from Maine, regarding the ocean. Here, however, I am sure the ocean is much more beautiful than it is off the coast of barren and bleak New England. What miles on miles of magnificent beach, solid and white as rock, on which the unwearying waves, the gracefully curving billows, beat continually!

I have been to North and South Beach several times—once to North Beach in a yacht. The thunder of the surf—wildly white, on the desolate and abandoned coast, that is covered with its closely packed growth of scrub palmetto and live oak and heaped with its pale sand dunes—sounded to me like the throbbing of the vast heart of the world laboring under some enormous sorrow. It is a sorrowful country, this along the dark blue sea with its wild and sullen look, and moaning eternally with the tireless surf; a land deserted of people, inhabitants, over whose sombre waste the dwellings, once full of life, but now abandoned, gaze out with their battered fronts, windowless and doorless, like blind and famished mariners wrecked on a desert island. The marsh-hens call from the sea-marshes, and the heron or crane goes clanging away over the wan gray levels of the marsh-grass. The sea-gulls flash, and the great ungainly pelicans soar and dip and skim, like specks of scud, through the flying foam of the booming breakers.

In St. Augustine things are different. Here we have the hotels—the finest in our country, perfect in every detail of architecture and otherwise, in whose courts the fountains flash and murmur, the flowers bloom, and the tropical trees whisper and wave; while along their sunny loggias music echoes and women and men laze or lounge faultlessly attired and carelessly at ease. I am not at ease, however,

and shall leave tomorrow for Palm Beach, three hundred miles farther south—down the Indian River to Lake Worth, where, so report says, the world is Paradise, or the next thing to it. As I have always been rather inquisitive about that spot, I have decided to visit the locality. I go in a rather sceptical frame of mind regarding all that is said about it, so I have no fear of being greatly disappointed.

My regards to your auntie [Miss Hattie Bishop, later Mrs. J. B. Speed] and to your mother [Mrs. Adam Robbins]. Very sincerely your friend, Madison Cawein.

1899, February 1, Palm Beach, Florida.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Only a brief line to let you know I am in Florida and enjoying myself greatly. It is very warm here at Palm Beach; the thermometer stands at nearly eighty, but the sea breeze is blowing and tempers things beautifully. I wish you were here by the ocean with me. The grounds of the Royal Ponciana are simply superb with their long avenues of cocoanut palms and palmetto trees and their great beds of tropical plants and flowers, their orange trees and lemon trees in bloom and at the same time loaded with green and ripe fruit. I have just come in from a stroll along the ocean beach also from a long walk by Lake Worth with its broad belt of cocoanut palms and its lovely grounds. The wind blows softly through the open windows and the sound of the surf and the fragrance of the flowers and grass and shrubbery, make it something akin to Paradise. * * * But I like St. Augustine much better. It is a beautiful place full of quaintness and interest, with its old fort and its narrow old streets. Its hotels are perfect gems of architecture, with their courts full of flowers and tropical trees and plants and their loggias that echo with the falling of the fountains and the music of the bands. I wish you were here with me to enjoy it all. I am sure it would fill you with poetical longings as it has me. My mother and sister who are in St. Augustine, of course, are quite a comfort to me. * * *

1899, February 5, St. Augustine, Florida.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: Your word concerning the weather you are having at home fills me full of a fierce desire to return and enjoy once more the wild winds of the North.

I have just returned from an attempt to force my way into old Fort Marion—or as the Spaniards called it, San Marco—which is over three hundred years old and in which the captured Seminoles, along with their chief Osceola, were incarcerated after the Florida war. It is now a military prison of the United States Army; but the sergeant of the guard and the sentinel at the entrance over the moat

barred my passage, in spite of the fact that I flashed a pass from headquarters in their eyes; and I was compelled to return along with some disappointed ladies to the hotel, hot and disgusted.

Your letter awaited me like a cool breeze from the land of snow and I am greatly thankful, for it has refreshed me wonderfully. The thermometer stands above eighty today, but a breeze is fluttering the palmettos under my window, and under its dim persuasion I have been able to cast off languor and to write you a line or two.

Since I wrote you I have been some three hundred miles south of St. Augustine, to Palm Beach and Lake Worth where the climate is something to wonder at. While you and yours were shivering over the gas, here we were wearing our very lightest garments and in surf-bathing, boating and jinrickshaing.

The grounds of these vast hotels are simply marvellous; cocoanut palms, begonia, orange trees, hibiscus, lemon trees, oleanders, etc., etc., ad infinitum, all in bloom, or bearing fruit while blooming, combine with fountains, the sparkle of the Lake and the mellow murmurs of the breakers on the beach to make a place somewhat approaching what my idea of Paradise may be.

Ours is a mighty country. What other country can you name that possesses such a variety of climates? In what other do we have such extremes? If we broil, we can pack our trunks and hie us away to Maine; if we freeze, we can do likewise and flutter away to Florida. It is quite a comfortable land, this that the good God has given us, and we ought to be very grateful and love it and Him—or should I say Him and it?—for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us through it.

St. Augustine is my favorite, however, in spite of the great beauty of Palm Beach and its climate. I am here again for another week, when I return to Louisville. I am restless still, you see, and never contented. That is a curse, is it not? But are not all seekers after the ideal so? I think so!

I have gathered strawberries and eaten them with great relish, as also oranges and guavas. The kumquat oranges I sent you are from farther south; I have not seen them growing here. I think them very aromatic and, as you say, a tiny Japanese sort of fruit, delicate and delightful. My regards to your mother and auntie. Very truly your friend.—Madison J. Cawein

1899, FEBRUARY 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I enjoyed your letters to me in Florida. The trip now is like some warm, green dream, flowery and fragrant, that I dreamed long, long ago. How actually unreal are all our experiences after all when viewed in retrospection. If it were not for the remem-

bered pleasure or pain, they would be really so, would they not? Longing and regret, perhaps, are the most real, material things we possess in life, since they are continually with us and hence [being], a portion of us, are really *we*. [They are] things we can never escape from—can never escape from.

What you tell me about the literary man and the preacher in your Asylum [St. Louis Insane Asylum] has entertained me very much. The preacher may be right regarding Paul's appearance; but who can say—so may I. I have never read, or heard of any authentic description of his appearance. At any rate, art has licenses and liberties which would justify me in giving him any form or manner I chose in order to arrive at, or attain to, the end, the representation of the picture I had in mind. * * *

1899, March 21.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I wonder at Rudyard Kipling's facility, his knowledge of humanity and his fertility. But he overcrowds all his works with strange, unusual words, with not-to-be-found-in-the-dictionary hosts of names of things and places which is sadly exasperating and savors much of striving for effect through bewildering of the reader's intellect and the consequent impressing on him of "How very little you know, my dear Sir or Madam," and "how much Mr. Kipling knows, you see." This is bad for Kipling's future fame, I am afraid, no matter how great his fame may be at the present day. Technicalities never do well in verse, no matter how human that verse may be, and his verse is simply overburdened with them. Moreover he has not got rid of early influences like Browning and Tennyson. The first is very evident in his "McAndrew's Hymn;" the latter in "Song of the English," especially in those quatrains through which the various cities of England's many colonies speak; here the influence is decided and one sees the Tennyson of the "Palace of Art" and the "Dream of Fair Women" peering curiously out at him through alien eyeglasses. Also in his "Mary Gloster" we see Tennyson again, a debased, ignoble Tennyson, of vile and distorted physiognomy, the Tennyson of "The Grandmother" and other beautiful ballads of that kind. Then Percy's *Reliques* came in for a turn in the "Last Rhyme of True Thomas," and so on, and so on. * * *

1899, March 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I want to thank you for the very great pleasure you have given to me in introducing such a remarkable writer as Mrs. Kate Chopin. I have been carefully reading her

Bayou Folks for the past week and each succeeding story has elicited exclamation of delight from me. I do not know when I read a book that filled me with such enthusiasm. George W. Cable did at one time; and Charles Ebgert Craddock at another. To complete this marvelous trilogy who is more deserving than Kate Chopin? * * * *The Awakening* is a most beautiful and a most sad story. Mrs. Chopin made me feel everything she speaks of in this fine novel. * * * Have you read Harrison Robertson's new novelette, *If I Were a Man*? It has outsold all other books here, as well as in Washington. Another story worth reading—a short one—is in the April *Century*. It is by a young lady friend of mine, Miss Abbie Carter Goodloe. The title of the story is "Jack," and in many ways is better than anything Rudyard Kipling has ever done, at least anything American he has ever attempted. * * *

1899, MAY 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have just returned from the country, our farm, where I have been soaking myself with May moonshine and loveliness, and find your letter awaiting me, together with two formidable cylinders of proof from Putnam's * * * I flatter myself that it [*Myth and Romance*] contains, technically, my best work and that the poems therein are above the ordinary. I want you to give close reading to my favorites, especially "Anthem of Dawn," "Hymn to Desire," "Dithyrambics," "Music" and "Jotunheim." * * *

1899, MAY 19.

James Whitcomb Riley: How long it has been since we have exchanged letters, and how very long since I saw you! I had intended running up to Indianapolis last summer or fall just to grasp your genial fist, look in your kind face, and home again; but things interfered and I had to postpone that pleasure indefinitely. However, we don't forget each other, I am confident. And neither does our good friend, Mr. William Dean Howells, who, I observe, has given both of us a liberal amount of praise in the current number of *The North American Review*. My dear Riley, how you are at last coming into your own! As I prophesied some years ago, you are at last recognized as the *leading*, the GREATEST poet of America and, in my opinion, of the English speaking world. Mr. Howells, in his article on "The New Poetry," says so; and says so straight from his mouth—no circumlocutory vagueness about what *he* says; and he is the man to know, our greatest critic, our greatest writer of fiction. How well I remember carrying him your volume of *Neighborly Poems* some

eight years ago, with an inscription from you in it, and how softly yet pleasantly his eyes sparkled when I presented it to him personally! How his estimate of your genius has never varied since that time. He never makes a mistake about the merits of a writer, and he is always happy and staunch in his loves. He has proven so in our cases, has he not? And we, I am sure, will never falter in our affection for such a man, such a whole-souled, unselfish, sweet nature—rare especially among literary men—as Howells'.

I see your young friend Tarkington has blossomed forth into a writer of much ability in the current *McClure's*. Indianapolis is becoming quite a literary community. With love and heartiest congratulations, your friend as always, Madison Cawein.

1899, May 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I suppose you have not read [in the proof sheets of *Myth and Romance*] "The Land of Illusion" and "The Spirit of Dreams;" nor the one entitled "The Purple Valleys," which is steeped in the very blood of my heart and full of myself and my soul's most terrible experience. I am sorry that you cannot see the imaginative superiority and sustained loftiness of my favorite "Jotunheim" which I consider, next to "Dionysia," the best thing in the volume. * * * The poems in the second part of the book are entirely different from the first, as you will observe, and in some ways inferior to those poems. However, there are a few that are worth while, I think—especially the last one, entitled "Processional," which is, to my mind, no matter what others may think of it. * * *

1899, June 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I received your lovely sonnet and letters. * * * It seems to me that I am very unworthy of all you say of me, and especially of the sonnet which says such fine things in such beautiful words. I appreciate everything you take the trouble to write me; so much, however, that I, for the time being, at any rate, persuade myself that it is all true and that, perhaps, I am a pretty good poet. After awhile then it is borne in upon me that I am a writer with great limitations, and one who has happily done his best, not up to the average juvenile work of the great poets of literature. But why go on? You make me feel, at least for the time being, that I am great, in some respects, as a poet, and that is very gratifying. It would not be well for me to feel that way always, for then I am sure I should become even less than I am. * * *

1899, August 18, St. Louis.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: I met Mrs. Kate Chopin last evening together with a number of charming St. Louis people who seemed to be acquainted with my work, much to my surprise I must say. She is a lovely woman of fifty-two, but still fine-looking and capable of exciting the enthusiastic admiration of men much younger than herself. She must have been very beautiful indeed when she was in her twenties and thirties. We passed a delightful evening of ghost stories and poetry. I thought of how you would have enjoyed it—the ghost stories especially. A Mr. Schuyler told some interesting ones, but I flatter myself that mine—in subject, at least, if not as well-worded as his—were the most thrilling. Mrs. Chopin is a great sceptic, but she seemed to be very much interested; perhaps, if given a chance I might be able to convert her to believing in them. * * * I had intended merely dropping you a line, and behold my line has grown to a letter. I beg your pardon for imposing on your good nature and time in this manner. * * *

1899, August 22.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * "The Tree-Toad" has been accepted by *The Atlantic Monthly* where the humble, homely little reptile will appear in due course of time. I found a most charming letter of some length from that distinguished magazine on my return [from my visit to you in St. Louis]. Mr. Bliss Perry, editor, goes into some length of admiration over the poem. * * *

1899, September 21.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have just returned from a trip to the country where I have been enjoying myself with some young lady friends and a young poet, Cale Young Rice, who published a volume of verse [*From Dusk to Dusk*] last year. I wish you could see this beautiful country now, especially in the neighborhood of our farm. Everything is taking on the sad yet happy tone of early autumn. The drouth-dried creek-beds are strewn with fallen leaves and dropped acorns and walnuts. A dreamy haze rests on the evening landscape and the morning hills and woods show wild and vague under vanishing mist. Indeed, the surrounding fields and forests reminded me of Tennyson's poems, not because we read Tennyson under the cedars while resting ourselves, but because the country here is really Tennysonian; and he has described it unknowingly in his lines, especially in "In Memoriam," as if he had lived here. * * *

1899, SEPTEMBER 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I shall be pleased to let you have some data necessary for the writing of a sketch of myself for *The Hesperian*. It is very kind of you to undertake such an amount of work. I was born, as you know, in Louisville, Kentucky, on the twenty-third day of March, 1865. I was educated in the public schools of this city and its immediate neighborhood. I resided several years during my early boyhood in the country in the vicinity of Louisville and New Albany, Indiana. Here I first absorbed myself in nature and learned my first lessons of love and poetry. After a five year course of study, I was graduated [June 11, 1886], receiving the degree of Bachelor of Arts, from the Male High School of this city. While attending this school I commenced writing verse. I was seventeen or eighteen years of age then, and used to hurry through my lessons at home in order to be able to write poetry at night. I often sat up until very late, one or two o'clock, writing. I accumulated quite a mass of *MSS.* in this way, from which I selected my first volume a year after I graduated. I had sufficient *MS.* at that time to publish two large volumes, but after making a careful selection I burned the discarded heap of epics, ballads and lyrics, and published the selected pile under the title of *Blooms of the Berry*, which Mr. Howells reviewed most favorably in the Study of *Harper's Magazine* the following year. His review attracted the attention of other critics who had ignored my book up to this time. *The Atlantic Monthly* had also noticed my little book with favor.

I was encouraged to go on, and so in the following spring, 1888, published my second volume, *The Triumph of Music*, which was even better received than my first volume by Mr. Howells. He gave it an elaborate and eulogistic review in the Study of *Harper's Magazine*. Since then I have gone on publishing, as you know, the different volumes of all of which you have copies. They are as follows in chronological order: * * * and *Myth and Romance*, 1899. * * *

1899, OCTOBER 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have just finished a careful reading of your article on my poetry you were kind enough to send to me. You have thoroughly covered the field, I must say, and every phase of my verse is shown up to advantage in your paper and treated in a masterly manner. You surprise me. I never knew you were such a fine critic before. You certainly show in this article that you can write excellent criticism if you desire to. However, you have not closely observed the admonition of the editor of *The Hesperian* [Alexander N. De Menil, St. Louis], not to make the article strictly a eulogistic one. Don't

you think he will object to it on those grounds? I hope not, as I should like to see it taken as it now stands. I am proud of it, and more than grateful to you. How can I express my thanks! There are no words adequate to do so when it comes to a question of such between friend and friend. You, I am sure, will understand and appreciate my feelings.

One thing that I would suggest, however, is that you give the article a different ending. As it now stands it seems to me that the finale is weaker than any other portion of the paper. Some few words, a paragraph or two in conclusion, summing up my work in general or the future possibilities it suggests or is capable of, would be more appropriate and would clinch the subject more as a whole, rather than the single line commenting on the little quotation from "The Faery Morris." Don't you think so? Use your own judgment, however, about it. Whatever you think or say, I assure you, shall meet with my full approbation. [The article was published in the January-March, 1900, number of *The Hesperian.*] * * *

1899, November 1.

R. E. Lee Gibson: In reply to Mr. De Menil's criticism concerning the conferring of the degree of B. A. by public schools in other cities—by high schools, I mean—he is probably right. That I received the degree from the Male High School of Louisville, Kentucky, I am certain, and my sheepskin diploma can attest. At the time I attended the High School of this city the course of study was a very high one. In it were included Greek, Latin, and German; the highest mathematics—geometry, trigonometry and calculus—the most difficult and detested of all numbers were taught, to say nothing of physics, chemistry, logic and philosophy. Our course was a five year course. Since then it has been cut down to a four year course and many of the more abstruse studies eliminated. On graduating from the Louisville Male High School we were qualified B.A.'s and received a diploma to that effect. The course was so difficult that the classes graduated were small, very small compared with the later ones. At that time, a graduate from our High School was admitted without further examination into the Sophomore Class of either Yale or Harvard. I thought it best to write this to you so that, if you desired, you might tell Mr. De Menil that you were correct in your assertion and that a diploma, if required, can be produced in proof of what you say. * * *

I am writing a great deal again. Have recently had poems accepted by *The Woman's Home Companion*, *Youth's Companion*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and a long poem of some fifty lines, entitled "A Twilight Moth," by *Lippincott's Magazine*. All of the above took two or more poems at one time as offered. * * *

1900, FEBRUARY 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am glad to see that things are coming your way at last. It is no more than you and your poetry are deserving of. I am glad that you are to be given a prominent and special article in *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Everything comes to him who waits, and at last it seems that St. Louis is becoming appreciative of a man who is really a poet and who has done some fine things in verse, at least, if not great things. Of course, we all can't be great poets like Browning, Swinbourne, Tennyson and Arnold; but then we can add our voices to the general choir which goes to make the literature of the world, and enrich it by one lyric or more, as it may be. And why should it matter greatly to us if we are remembered by many books of great poetry or simply by a single fine poem? We are remembered; we are as much remembered, immortalized, by the one as by the other. It is an inheritance that cannot be taken from us. * * *

1900, MARCH 4.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * At present all literary labor is checked for me. I am laboring under the fear of some approaching financial catastrophe. I have something like half of my capital—on the interest of which I am now dependent for my living—invested in a concern here which, I learn confidentially from one in authority and who ought to know, will be compelled to quit business, go into the hands of a receiver or into liquidation. * * *

1900, MARCH 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have at last completed my re-writing of "One Day and Another" [originally published in *Days and Dreams*, 1891] and think that I have my best long poem in that. * * * I have done nothing else all winter but work steadily and conscientiously on this poem, and I think it is vastly improved. In fact, I do not hesitate to say that I know of nothing in modern poetical literature that is exactly like it, or better for that matter. I have worked every day and Sunday on it and am in love with it. It is a new poem now in many respects. * * * [The re-written poem comprises the booklet *One Day and Another*].

1900, APRIL 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * At least two thirds of the poems which I have written during the past year have been accepted and paid for by various magazines in the East. * * * Thanks for your interest in my financial affairs. I did get out of one of those

companies at a small loss—some three hundred dollars. But it might have been ten times that amount. I have made it up, however, in some of the checks received for poems within the past six months. * * *

1900, April 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The only criticism I could make of your fine sonnet [Landscape], if I wanted to be hypercritical, is the transposition which occurs in the ninth line—"the complaining shrill." Riley at one time preached at me so tremendously against this old classic form that I have never recovered entirely from a certain prejudice towards all transpositions which he instilled into me with his vehement arguments. The last line of the sonnet is one to be very proud of. It is a fine figure and a fine climax to the poem. * * *

1900, May 24.

Miss Leigh Gordon Giltner: It has been a long, long time since I received a book of poems that gave me such unalloyed pleasure as your *Path of Dreams* has given me. Many of the poems I had read before, as you know, and had given you my opinion of; but it has been a reiterated delight to read them over again in this lovely little book. There is work in this book that stamps you as the first woman poet of the South, and indeed, I do not hesitate to say, perhaps, to be as great as any woman poet in this country or in England with whose work I am acquainted. You have very little if anything to fear from the critics with such work as this you give to them. Your coloring is sumptuous; your feeling and philosophy, great; your vocabulary, marvelous.

Such poems as "A Challenge", "Carmen", and "In Bondage" are worthy of the very highest praise and they will receive it, I am certain. The "Path of Dreams" and "Sartor Resartus" are most impressive and any poet living might sign them with pride. As to your longer poem, of which you spoke so discouragingly to me at one time, it is very good and has interested and pleased me greatly; of course, it is suggestive of "Maud" which it slightly imitates in manner and style; and yet it is not Tennyson, no more than is your poem "When Love Passed By" Swinburne, because it is written in Swinburnian meter. "Roses and Rue" is a beautiful love story. Your sonnets are all good. "Hedonism" I like best. I was impressed by the little poem "Antithesis," which is a flawless and perfect jewel. Any poet at any time, or in any country, would be proud of this sad, simple, sweet truth expressed in eight graphic and harmonious lines. All of your pieces on nature show a master touch. Indeed, I do believe

that with the publication of this book of yours most of the male poets of the South, of Kentucky at least, will have to retire and give precedence to you. There is no doubt about the excellence of this remarkable first book of yours, which is remarkable in many things and ways and over which I am very enthusiastic.

Having concealed so thoroughly your sex under your name you will probably now have to suffer for it by submitting to be criticised by the reviews as a male poet and not a female one. They are usually kinder to the women poets than to the men, you know. But there is no femininity about your work, except that of deep devotion, love and passion which the women always do better than the men, because their emotions are greater and their love truer. With thanks and best wishes for success, your true friend always, Madison Cawein.

1900, JUNE 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * A week or so ago I received a check for seventy dollars from *Harper's Magazine* for two poems. They are entitled "Drouth" [36 lines] and "The Chipmunk" [32 lines]. I am sure you will like them. Together with the check came the proofs of the poems, and so I imagine they are to be published very early, perhaps this summer. * * *

1900, JUNE 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter from Thomas Bailey Aldrich interested me very much indeed, particularly the good words about Riley's *Flying Islands of the Night.* But the whole letter was most interesting and one that you should treasure, as no doubt you will, among your most precious souvenirs.

The two sonnets you sent me are flawless. I have no criticism to make on such fine work as that represented in the one entitled "Tyranny." It reminds one of the best things, in this difficult form, that Keats has done. Indeed, I do not think that Keats would have hesitated to attach his name to "Tyranny." It is beautiful, and if you don't get it accepted by some magazine I should consider myself a poor judge and a false prophet. Send it away as it stands now; send it to *Harper's Magazine.* Do not send it, however, on paper bearing the letterhead of the St. Louis Insane Asylum, but give them your Arsenal Street address. Magazine editors are queer fish, and if they thought you were connected with an Insane Asylum would probably reject the manuscript without giving it even a reading. The best way is to let them know nothing about your method of obtaining a living, you personally, or your occupation. I have found it so; you will likewise. ["Tyranny" appeared in the *Cosmopolitan,* October, 1900.] * * *

1900, SEPTEMBER 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * As I have told you before, and often, all that is needed by you is a little patience and perseverance. Your sonnets are noble and notable. * * * Keep on, my dear old boy, and cheer up! I think periods of despondency are worst and most frequent during the summer months. It must be the heat and the summer silence and sadness that conduce to bring about that physical and spiritual condition in the poetic temperament. I don't know what it is, anyhow: All I know is that during the greater part of August I, too, suffer unutterably from melancholy, despondency, blues, whatever you call it; and time and again wished I were dead—that life's "fitful fever" were finally ended once and for all and for good. I weary, as you do, I know, of the terrible burden of existence, the endless struggle for attainment, the pitiless irony of the actual, and all the misery, uselessness and emptiness of effort. Where will it all end? I often ask, and what is the use? Two terrible enigmas that God only can unriddle. * * *

1900, NOVEMBER 8.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I enclose a three-column notice ["Madison Capwein: The Omar Khayyan of the Ohio Valley, by Carrie S. Mahoney," from *The Constitution*, Sunday, November 4, 1900] chiefly drawn from your article in *The Hesperian* and from your letter to the author [Carl C. Marshall] of the article published last year in the *Puritan*. I never saw an article so butchered before by the compositor and proof-reader. I feel sorry for Old Omar and Dr. John Clark Ridpath both of whom are murdered here in name, if not in fact—to say nothing of my poor self with whose name they have committed all sorts of gymnastic feats, spelling it three different ways; the last one, "Carrien," is too suggestive of the dead which I hope even literarily I am far from being as yet. Miss Mahoney—for whom I feel very sorry, indeed—is all broken up over the article. She meant so well, and to have her well-meant praise turned into such a burlesque is enough to exasperate a saint. And this paper is the world-famous *Constitution* of Atlanta, Georgia! Well, they do work wonders in Atlanta sometimes, don't they? * * *

I agree with you regarding Rufus J. Childress' poetry. He occasionally writes a good strong line; in fact, frequently, but as a sustained effort of merit only one poem in his book *Woods and Waters* passes muster. That one poem is his "Ode to a Robin." [Republished in *Blades of Bluegrass*, an anthology of Kentucky poetry.] It stands out like an oasis in the desert. The man is self-deluded. He thinks himself a very great poet, as great as Shelley, Keats, or

Tennyson, and does not hesitate to tell you so, or to print it in little advertisement pamphlets to increase the sale of his "first volume of poems." He is to be greatly pitied, however, being almost destitute, with a large family on his hands. He was a milk-man, driving a milk wagon for a number of years at a very poor salary. And recently, up to within several months ago, was employed at a bread and cracker factory here in Louisville. He was discharged from it—it is a Trust—when he undertook the publication of his book. Since then he has waged a bitter war against all trusts in verse. He published a satire against them last month which, though it lacks ridicule—a necessary concomitant of all satire—contains some strong lines and thoughts. All in all, considering his circumstances, it is really remarkable to see what the man has done. Most of it, of course, is the merest rot—doggerel. But his love, his desire, his intention is all right. He has written stacks of stuff. He tells me that he has sufficient material on hand to make three books of the size of *Woods and Waters*. He is a great enthusiast about all poetry, especially about mine, and converses well and rationally. But when it comes to his poetry—count me out. Your friend as always, Madison Cawein.

1900, DECEMBER 9.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Mr. Bert Finck was highly delighted with your letter to him concerning his *Webs*, as he justly should be. He permitted me to read it and I must say that what you said in it any author would be proud of. The book is one that to my thinking would impress anybody as being original and the work of a man of talent. It is epigrammatic and full of aphorisms; and not only that, but there is poetry in it—real live, pulsating poetry. Had he been a Walt Whitman or a Stephen Crane he would have arranged his lines in poetical order and called his volume a volume of verses—and he would have been just as correct about it as they were about theirs, and perhaps a little more so, eh? * * *

1901, JANUARY 5.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am sorry to hear that you, too, are ailing. That seems to be a chronic condition in our household. Everyone, more or less, is sick. I suppose I may call myself the chief ailer, as I have been sick now almost a month. All sorts of complications have set in; my whole system is run down and full of fever and aches and God knows what else. I wonder if I shall ever get well again? I have two doctors and they ought to kill or cure me—the former would probably be the more desirable, as I have lost all interest in

everything—absolutely everything on earth. Poetry, especially my own, fills me with deepest disgust, and I cannot contemplate the writing or the reading of it without infinite loathing. Apathy seems to be my chronic state, and a desire to sit and brood and wish the whole sorry business of existence were at an end.

As to my book, I do not even think about it any more, much less inquire as to when it will be out. Its fate will be the fate of all the rest of my books— failure is printed on and over its title page. It too will receive a few good notices and bad, perhaps, and then drop into oblivion like all the rest. I am disheartened, sick, and weary of it all—all the fight, the struggle against irresistible fate. I have not written a line for weeks, nor looked at anything I ever wrote for months. This is a bad state to be in at the beginning of the new year, my friend, but it is due, I suppose, to my physical condition which is deplorable. But enough of this repining.

The poem, "Dusk," you refer to was not published in *The Saturday Evening Post* but in the January *Munsey's*. I am glad you admire it, but I myself could scarcely read it through with patience. But everything of mine seems worse than vile to me now.

I cannot give you an opinion of your poem on the "New Century" now. It strikes me as having some strong lines in it, but I believe that you have done many better things than this. When are you going to place your book in the hands of a publisher? You never say a word about it any more. I hope that you have not given up the idea altogether. * * *

Your reference to Charles J. O'Malley makes me tell you that he is going to leave Louisville for Pittsburg, I hear. No literary men can live in this wretched town. There is no encouragement, nothing in it for them. Your friend ever, M. J. Cawein.

1901, March 12.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I thank you for your kind letter of sympathy. My father's death [March 7, 1901], happening as it did so suddenly and away from home—for he was not stricken at home as the newspapers had it, but in a grocery whither he had gone to make some purchases—has filled our hearts and our house with gloom and sorrow. * * *

The winter, thank God, that is almost past, has been the most completely miserable and unhappy one that I ever experienced. For three months fully I was ill myself, and had been well for two or three weeks when this bereavement had to happen. Of course, writing of any sort has been entirely out of the question with me. * * *

1901, April 1.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter leaves me somewhat in doubt as to the improvement made in my new version of "One Day and Another" You say that "nearly all of the lyrics have been improved." "Nearly all" means that some have not been benefited by my revision, and I intended that every one should be. I labored long and greatly at this poem, trying to make it perfect, and hoped that I had made it so, as much so as it is capable of being made so. If I have failed it is simply the fault of my talent, that is all.

You do not say anything in your letter about the lyrics added, that are entirely new. Only one or two seem to have caught your fancy: [Beginning] "Over the fields of millet," and "What little things are those." These two are probably the best, but there are several others that I thought a great deal of. As to the changes made in the poem [beginning] "Perhaps we lived in the days," etc., they were made with care and circumspection, after long and deep consideration. The poem originally simply bristled with transpositions, which always indicate amateurishness. I set out with the determination to eliminate as many of those as I could. Some still remain. The poem as a whole is little changed throughout. Your objection to the omission of the two lines—"Mouth like a pomegranate split, with the light of her language lit," may be correct and justifiable. But I think that the two lines substituted, "Mouth like a cloven peach, sweet with her smiling speech," are more effective and in some respects more beautiful. That "split" in the first version was not to be endured, moreover it was a transposition. Also, the line "Tall shaped like the letter I," was exceedingly bad. The letter "I" has no form whatever, straight up and down, but I wanted to convey the idea of how she carried herself, so I changed it to "She stands like the letter I," etc., which is far more effective, to my thinking. I think that in time you too will come to care more for this new version of that lyric than you do for the old. I hope so. * * *

1901, April 30.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: I have been visiting the beautiful country a great deal; in fact every day since the advent of spring, and have found the wild-flowers more abundant this year than in any previous spring of my recollection. Especially of Eastern Park [Cherokee Park] is this true. Their delicate and beautiful hosts simply swarm over its sward and have taken its woods and hillsides by storm. It's a sight worth seeing. * * *

1901, MAY 31.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I read your letter last night to my friend, Dr. Henry A. Cottell, to whom the book [*Weeds by the Wall*] is dedicated, and he was as pleased with it as I myself was. * * * If all that you say about the book is true—but I can hardly believe it is in the face of other facts, reviews, particularly that are to be—then I am indeed a lucky fellow, and one to be greatly envied by the rest of the poets in the country. * * *

1901, JUNE 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I sent you a copy of *Judge* with a poem of mine in it, illustrated. It is quite different from my other work and was written in exasperation to an ice-cold girl whom I have been trying to make fall in love with me for the past four or five years, but who just persistently won't. I'll have to try to let up trying now, I think, and turn my attention to some other girl, kinder if not fairer. Do you know of any such who would like to take a poet in out of the cold? * * * [The poem referred to appeared in *Judge*, June 29, 1901, under the title "To Let." The original *MS.* was presented to Miss Gertrude McKelvey and is still preserved. It is headed. "The Girl of Girls—to the tune of 'They're Hanging Danny Deever.'" In it Mr. Cawein gives Gertrude as the name of the girl of whom he complains and whose heart is "to let". In the printed poem the name is Lydia. The poem was not reprinted in any of the Cawein books.]

1901, AUGUST 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have called recently on Miss Hattie Bishop [Mrs. J. B. Speed] and Miss Jenny Robbins. They are staunch admirers of you—your poetry, your character and your nature—and were delighted with your call. You certainly impressed them. Miss Hattie told me to tell you that she will not be able to get those flowers from the grave of Keats for several months yet, because all her friends are away from Rome just now and will not return until September or October. When they return she will have the flowers gathered and sent to you. * * *

1901, AUGUST 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Riley was here yesterday and I passed a delightful day with him, Dr. Cottell and Young E. Allison. We took lunch at Seelbach's Restaurant and had a very good time.

It was not quite as fine as our evening at Fontaine Ferry Park [a month ago when you were here]; that evening could hardly be duplicated or bettered to my thinking. Riley looks greatly improved. He particularly asked me about you. He spoke appreciatively of you as a man and a poet. * * *

1901, August 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have just received a letter from the great Edmund Gosse in which he offers to be sponsor for a volume of selected poems to be published in London. He said he has often been asked "to be sponsor for American poets but has always refused." He continues thus: "for, unless one is quite in sympathy with a writer, such a task is the heaviest of burdens. But to you—who have never suggested such a thing—I would say that it would be a great and genuine pleasure to me to introduce a selection of your work, if you ever thought of such a thing." Is not that encouraging, coming from so great a critic and literary man as Edmund Gosse is? * * *

1901, September 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been so wrought up over the disaster that has befallen our country through the hand of an assassin, that I have, for the time being, practically given up writing. The death of McKinley is terrible! terrible! I have not had anything to affect me so since the killing of Garfield. No punishment on earth is adequate to the crime. * * *

1901, September 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: The news you have for me is very depressing. Why do children, little innocent children, have to suffer so? I am more than grieved to hear of little Elaine's illness [Elaine Cawein Gibson]. Typhoid fever is terrible, but not so bad as scarlet fever. I do not think there is any disease on earth as bad as the latter. So thank your stars that it is not the scarlet fever that she has. My mother told me to tell you that your little girl would get well. She can usually tell. I don't know how, but it is so. She was able to foretell the recovery of our own little boy even when the doctor, his father [Dr. Charles L. Cawein], and mother and everybody else had given up hope. Your baby will get well. [And both are alive today—1921.]

I had a great time in Cincinnati, at the Convention of Authors and Editors of the Ohio Valley. I met a number of lovely people, some known, some unknown to me, but all literary or doing literary work. * * * I was given a reception by a very nice gentleman, Charles T. Greve, the Chairman of the Convention, a lawyer and a critic, at his beautiful and tasteful home. I do not know why he selected me especially for the honor, there being older, much older, and better men, authors and poets, than myself present. But we had a very elaborate entertainment Then I met the poet John James Piatt, and William Henry Venable; also Charles Frederic Goss, author of *The Redemption of David Carson*, and several other prominent writers, editors and publishers.

On my return I found an acceptation, inclosing a check for $20.00 from *Harper's Magazine*. It was for a poem, a sonnet, that I dreamed, wrote while in my sleep as it were, or that was suggested in sleep to me. It is entitled "The Death of Love." I cannot repeat certain lines of it to myself without experiencing inexplicable emotion. * * *

1901, SEPTEMBER 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * John P. Morton & Company said your *Sonnets and Lyrics* would be ready for delivery next Monday. [*Sonnets and Lyrics*, by R. E. Lee Gibson, is dedicated to Cawein.] * * * The first ones to whom I shall deliver copies out of the twenty-five allotted to me are Dr. Cottell, Miss Hattie Bishop, Miss Jenny Robbins, Miss Anna Blanche McGill and Miss Gertrude McKelvey, who, by the way, has left me for New York, where she went to study music. I feel the separation is a permanent one; I don't know why. I miss her greatly. I shall also give Bert Finck and Cale Young Rice one. I shall send a copy to William Dean Howells and any other friends who I think will appreciate it. * * *

1901, OCTOBER 11.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I read Lucien V. Rule's letter to you. It is a very fine tribute to you as a poet. He means everything he says. He is a very conscientious man and says only what he means. He is a scholar as well as a poet and essayist of fine intellect. He is no poor critic, either. * * *

1901, OCTOBER 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I enclose a letter and a clipping. The letter is from a young lady friend of mine, Miss Leigh Gordon Giltner, of Eminence, Kentucky, who writes for the magazines and

has published one volume of most excellent verse, *The Path of Dreams* [1900]. She is quite well known to our people of Kentucky. She writes critical articles as well as poetry and fiction for the Eastern press and magazines. The clipping is from the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* and was written by one of the loveliest young ladies as well as writers of Louisiana, Miss Helen Pitkins, the "La Belle Helene" of *Weeds by the Wall.*

She is a poetess, as well as a writer of stories, and they say, the highest salaried newspaper woman in the South. We have corresponded for years but have never met. She is a great society girl also; a personal friend of Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Lilian Whiting. * * *

1901, October 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I just had a letter from Edmund Gosse, written from Venice, from the palace where Browning used to live when there, and at the very table and window at which Browning used to sit and write. Mr. Gosse is very flattering and I suppose I ought to be swelled to twice my natural size by his offer to make a gift to me of the introduction to my prospective volume of selections to be published in England. I have made the selections and am having them typewritten now. The work is fairly launched and, if Mr. Gosse approves and can find a publisher for it in London, I suppose we shall see it printed some time next year, either spring or fall. [Published in 1902 as *Kentucky Poems*]. * * *

1901, November 4.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I finished my selection last Saturday and sent the *MS.* away at once to Mr. Gosse in London. It comprises over two hundred pages of typewritten matter, which Mr. Gosse will treat independently, cutting out a great deal, I have no doubt, and adding perhaps, some pieces that he approves of. It is a great compliment that Mr. Gosse is paying me, and I appreciate it highly, I tell you. That he should volunteer to undertake this work for me and find a publisher is more than I ever dreamed of. * * *

1901, November 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have just received a copy of William Archer's *Poets of the Younger Generation.* It contains a full-page portrait of myself and eleven pages about my poetry, with extracts. The criticism is a fair one and, coming from such an eminent

English authority, is one that I am proud of, indeed. The American poets treated of in the volume number hardly a half dozen, the other twenty-seven are all Englishmen, Kipling, Watson, Phillips, Thompson, etc. You ought to get this book; it will introduce to you a lot of magnificent verse, some of which you, like myself, could never have seen before. The book is published by John Lane, London, and can be had through your bookseller. The price is high—six dollars—but the volume is worth it. * * *

1901, DECEMBER 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * What you said in your former letter regarding Archer's article in *Poets of the Younger Generation*, is true. I myself was at first very much put out, chagrined in fact, with the beginning and the ending of the article. But after I had read the other articles I felt better, as Mr. Archer was rather severe, at times, with them all, even with Phillips. * * *

1902, JANUARY 2.

Edmund W. Taylor: The only fault that I have to find with your little book of poems [*The Issue and Other Poems*] is that it is too small and the poems too few. But what you lack in quantity you make up in quality. * * * I have not gotten over the beauty of "The Roses in the Garden" yet, and I shall not soon, I am certain. It is a poem that would have delighted the soul of Heine, I am sure—so high, so pure, so exquisitely perfect. "Reflection" I had the pleasure of hearing you repeat at one time. It is a fine piece of work and very satisfying. The two quatrains, "The Poet," pleased me greatly. In fact, as I said before, there is not a poem in the little book that does not sing itself into the memory. * * * I am glad to extend to you the hand of fraternity in our "brotherhood of song." * * *

1902, JANUARY 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am slowly rewriting everything that I care to retain in *Moods and Memories*. After that I shall take up *Days and Dreams* or what is left of it since the new publication of "One Day and Another." * * * All of my changes I think will be for the betterment of the poems. * * * I don't know how long I have to live and I want to leave my work in a good state when I do have to go. I want to be satisfied with it, and I am far from being

that at present with my earliest work. I don't seem to get any better in that trouble that has taken hold of my kidneys. It depresses me very much occasionally.

Mr. Gosse writes me that the poems in *MS.* sent to him by me have pleased him greatly; that all my changes have vastly improved the poems. Some of them are so changed as to be almost new; indeed, they are new in a certain sense. He says that the beauty of my nature work impresses him more and more. * * *

Yes, my mother was married and that to a very excellent gentleman, Mr. J. Henry Doerr. You may have met him when you were here at one time. He has been a noble friend of our family for years, and was associated, at one time, with my father in business. They, with my sister, are enjoying the beauties of Florida now, and will be away until April the first.

Sometimes I think that I ought to get married and lead a different life from what I do lead. But a man never knows what sort of a woman he is getting until he is tied to one. I might be very happy, married, who knows; and then I might be the contrary. I am nearly thirty-seven years old, and that is considerable! Moreover, making and keeping up of a home takes considerable money, and time also. I might not be able to afford it, and might have to take some position or other which would take away from my time for literary labor. The girl I think most of does not seem to think most of me. She [Miss Gertrude McKelvey] left long ago, last September, for New York City, and is studying music there. I don't think that she loves me, but she is a very good friend of mine. It might be different, perhaps, if I were different, and there might be a marriage. Who knows what fate has in store for us anyway? * * *

1902, April 6.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * My limbs have swollen to such proportions as to almost necessitate my dispensing with shoes and underwear. * * * God knows where it will all end. I have not been a drinking or a dissipated man, and why I should be afflicted with this disease, is one of the mysteries of destiny I suppose. Dropsy, of all diseases, I loath and abhor. Of course I am not doing any work. * * *

1902, May 4, Lithia Springs, Georgia.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have just returned from a long walk in the Georgia woods. How I do wish you were here with me to enjoy the heavenly beauty of the May as she demonstrates herself here

at Lithia Springs. The mocking bird makes the mornings melodious. The thrushes, fluting like the pipes of Pan or of Fauns hidden away deep in the pines and oaks, lure one to follow on and on until one loses himself in dreams among the wild flowers. I never saw such an abundance of wild flowers as there is here. The ways are covered with them. The woods are full of them. It is such a glory to walk and see and breathe it all. The winds are warm and the air smells like locust-honey and wine of balsam. The days are calm and blue and sweet as a dream of youth. The nights are calm and serene and beautiful as a dream of love. It is a land, a region of rest and love and poetry. * * *

1902, May 8, Lithia Springs, Georgia.

Lucien V. Rule: I received your letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from you. I am sorry that I missed the pleasure of seeing you when you were in town [Louisville], but then you might come down here and we could have a nice long talk together and a nicer, longer walk in the woods surrounding this beautiful hotel. It is very picturesque and romantic around Lithia Springs, whose waters are doing me a great deal of good, I think. I am also taking the baths that, being also of lithia water, are benefiting me greatly. I expect to return home a well man, *deo volente.*

The woods here are overgrown with wild-flowers; wild honey-suckle, wild phlox and calacanthus; and ferns!—in masses, sometimes above your waist. The brooks bubble over beds of crystal, honestly and virtually speaking,—not figuratively,—for everywhere, in the fields, on the roads, in the woods, are scattered boulders and pebbles and pieces of sparkling white spar, which is crystal of some sort. I have seen lots of it and the creeks ripple and babble musically over it.

Near the hotel [Sweetwater Park Hotel] is a place going absolutely to ruin now; in its time it was a Chautauqua, where revivals were held, meetings of all sort, for pleasure, religion and politics. Vast buildings, built in the forest, stuccoed and of fantastic yet beautiful architecture of the Moorish order, with towers and turrets and loggias; also a large amphitheatre capable of seating thousands, are slowly moulding to decay here. What was once an artificial lake, covering several acres, is now merely a frog-pond filled with mud and weeds in whose center an old oar boat is slowly rotting.

It is a very picturesque place; and in one spot there is a mound some twenty or thirty feet high up which and around which all wound a road. The road is scarcely discernible now, for the entire mound is overgrown with the tame honey-suckle vines, commencing to bloom, and forms a fragrant tombstone for the dead body of the old place lying mouldering there. I love to climb to the top of this green and

fragrant monument and stand there and watch the sunset in the West, and listen to the wind in the pines that seems mourning something lost and never to be found again—Never! Never!

It is a lovely place, altogether, this hotel, with its charming people and its beautiful grounds filled with flowers and trees, the holly, the locust, the oak and sweet gum; roses and fountains, syringa bushes and mountain laurel in full bloom and over it all the blue sky of Georgia vibrating with the melody of birds, the mocking bird and the thrush, whose note is the sweetest I ever heard.

Write me again if you can and remember me as always your friend, Madison J. Cawein.

1902, May 9, Lithia Springs, Georgia.

Miss Jenny Loring Robbins: This is really the loveliest place I have ever visited, and I am falling more and more in love with the hotel, its grounds, and the people in and around them, to say nothing of the woods and the waters, the latter of which I am drinking with much gusto and, I hope, benefit.

I have been here over a week now and must say have never in my life come across such an abundance, such a profusion of wild-flowers before. I am very sorry that I did not bring my wild-flower books along with me, as there are a number that I am unable to identify or get anybody to name for me. I have just returned from the woods—there is plenty of forest-land around the hotel, woods of pine and oak mostly, but beeches and tulip-poplars here and there—and brought with me a bunch of beautiful wild-flowers. In fact I keep a glass full in my room continually—every day, almost, changing the old for the new, and every day new varieties. I have found in profusion the false Solomon's-seal blooming here; I never saw it before in our locality. Ferns, too, that are simply enormous, filling the lush green valleys of the brooks with their fronds, often reaching to my chest, and from their centres shooting up an auburn-red spike of fairy-like seeds. The calacanthus, too, I have found growing wild in the woods and in full bloom; the negroes here call it "sweet-shrub," but the wild variety, larger and ruddier in blossom than the cultivated, has no odor—that is, none that I could perceive. The blue-eyed grass, the bluet, the rattlesnake weed, wild phlox are blooming here in abundance; the latter especially. I never saw such fine specimens—or am I mistaken in calling it the wild phlox? Coming to think of it now, it reminds me more of the sweet-William and I believe it is the sweet-William.

When I arrived here last week, a little over a week ago, the woods were massed, simply blurred with bushes of the wild honeysuckle in full bloom. That is a sight that cannot be described; I shall never

forget the sumptuousness of the appearance of the banks and hillsides and the woodways gorgeous with the butterfly-like blossoms of this beautiful bush. The pansy-violets, too, laid their great clumps of utterly violet blossoms about the forests, which, along with the wild sweet-William, gave one the impression of beds of living coals of azure and crimson. There are wild-flowers coming on now—the honeysuckle and the pansy-violet being almost all gone—that I cannot name, that defy and evade me. A beautiful yellow flower that looks like an evening-primrose, delicately yellow, with four rounded petals, eight stamens, and a pistil cleft at the top into four parts, is dotting the woods like fire-flies. Its stem is about a foot tall and its leaves lanceolate. Then another flower that looks like the bloom of the rat-tail cactus, only it is white instead of scarlet, growing on an airy stalk from a whorl of leaves at its root, its stalk utterly leafless, has baffled me. It is white like our elder at home, about two inches,—sometimes more,—long, and smells like our elder-blossom. Another one is a bush covered with white slender-petaled blossoms, star-shaped, six petaled, smelling like heliotrope. And so on, and so on; low and high wild-flowers, shrubs, bushes and plants. Such a whirl, such a profusion I never saw before in my life; all that we have in Kentucky, and many more besides. Only I have not seen the May-apple here—not a stalk of it. The cross-vine, I found out its name, trails up and over the trees, here and there. Its blossoms hang in great clusters, and are conical-shaped like the gloxinia; outside they are colored a dirty purple turning to smoky yellow at the mouth of the blossom; the interior is a port-wine red; sombre and sullen it hangs or drops above you; it has a bitter acrid odor, not at all pleasant.

I go into the woods a great deal, and find much to interest me there. The wild-flowers first and then the brooks. These make the forest musical with their low voices, babbling as they do literally over crystal. This is the truth. Everywhere, in field and wood, by roadside and in the road or footpath, are splinters, pebbles and rocks of white crystal, and others full of mica and pyrites. The beds of the creeks are paven and filled with large pebbles, sometimes great boulders of this spar, over which the water flows clear and sweet and smooth.

I have found a number of old mills here. All dilapidated, or going to ruin; one a total ruin. One on Austell Run is supposed to be still in operation, but I have been there twice and neither time have I seen a soul. On the Sweetwater Creek, six miles from here, I found an old grist-mill, below a rushing and roaring dam. It is a great gaunt thing of frame, weather-beaten and old, but still in operation. A half mile below it, under a wild hill-side, on which the dog-wood was blooming in profusion, together with the wild honeysuckle, the other mill, built of rock and brick, towers five stories high. It was burned by General Sherman during the war and stands a sad relic of that time. It was a cotton mill, and the workers in it lived on the

hillside in their cottages, but their homes were burned also and not a vestige of them is left. Only the ruin—here is a wilderness of trees, great trees, grown up in its gaunt interior, crowding its crumbling walls, and the wild vines and creepers trailing over and covering its rocks and bricks—stands pathetically looking out upon the tumbling waters beneath and the projecting pines around. The creek, wooded wildly on both sides, foams and roars past it, over huge rocks and boulders, upon which it stares with its one mighty arch of stone, in which the mill-wheel once rushed and sounded, and its empty windows, like hollow eyes in the face of death.

This is a long letter; I hope you will forgive me for it. Now I shall go out on the verandah and watch the sunset over the pines. They are beautiful and serene here, always quiet—not angry or stormy. Give my regards to your aunt and remember me to your mother. Your friend always, Madison J. Cawein.

1902, May 11, Lithia Springs, Georgia.

James Whitcomb Riley: Your note did me lots of good, coming just in the nick of time when Mr. [Robert W.] Geiger was visiting me at Sweetwater. He and the rest of the literary clan, Harris and Stanton [Evelyn Harris and Frank L. Stanton who called on Mr. Cawein], want you to come down here. The beauty o' the May, as she demonstrates herself in Georgia, is something to dream about, not to attempt to describe. How could you get the wild honeysuckle, that masses the woodways with its white and pink fragility, like that of butterflies, into words? And then there are the crowfoot, or pansy-violets, bluer than her own blue skies, and the rattlesnake weed more golden than her own aureate dawns and dusks. These have passed, or are passing, but new glories are taking their places,—there are ferns, you know, almost as tall as yourself, with their red-brown spikes of fern seed that, they say, the Fairies use to make themselves invisible with, and which when sprinkled in the shoes o' mortals, on St. John's eve, makes them as invisible as the Fairies. The wild calacanthus, the false Solomon's-seal and the bluets now have their turn, and a hundred others after them. The thrushes and the cat-birds simply fag themselves out whistling their azure and golden-uniformed hosts up in the woods, and the pines and the oaks and the tulip-trees whisper their approval, and applaud their cavalcades.

Well, here I am, and delighted am I with the hotel and everybody in it. But I can't say that I am getting well rapidly. I thought I was improved last week, and believe I was, but the albumen that I find on testing in the morning and the dropsical condition persisting, and somewhat increasing, in my limbs, tell me I am *not* much better

for all the water I drink and all the baths I take. And so, about Friday or Saturday next will find me wending my weary way home again to commence the nauseating round of medicine-taking once more. I don't know where it is going to end. Nothing seems to benefit me. Things that benefit, that *cure*, other people don't have any effect on me. Your friend always with the old esteem and affection, Madison Cawein.

P. S. Will probably see Joel Harris Wednesday. He is still ailing, but sends me word he wants to see me. Cawein.

1902, MAY 19, LITHIA SPRINGS, GEORGIA.

James Whitcomb Riley: * * * I saw Uncle Remus [in Atlanta] last week and enjoyed an hour-or-so's talk with him at his beautiful home in the West End. Stanton was with me, also Evelyn Harris [son of Joel Chandler Harris]. Joel Chandler Harris looks poorly. He is still a very sick man, I am sorry to say. Mr. Geiger and Stanton were out to see me last Saturday, stayed to supper and we had quite a walk and considerable of a talk. I am returning home today. Shall go to Atlanta as the guest of Mr. Geiger for a day or so, then home once more. I have not been improved by the drinking of the waters here. My condition is about the same as it was when I came here. However, I have enjoyed myself greatly, wandering around the country and sitting on the veranda or under the trees meeting people and watching the roses bloom. * * *

My English volume of *Kentucky Poems*, with an introduction by Edmund Gosse, will be out sometime next month, I think; so look out for a copy; I am going to fire one at your kindly countenance. * * *

1902, JUNE 8.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been so long at revising my old poems that the new ones refuse to come. I have finished the volume at last for the American Selection and which I shall probably try to get published in the fall. I like it even better than I do the English Selection [*Kentucky Poems*]. It is larger and, moreover, contains other poems than nature ones. I call it "In the Garden of Polymina." * * * [The American Selection was abandoned. In 1907 *The Poems of Madison Cawein* in five volumes, was published.]

I feel languid and tired so much now, and very few things interest or entertain me as they used to. Even the girls have ceased to hold me as they used to. That's a bad sign, isn't it? But they are usually such a disturbing element in the lives of all men that I feel as if I ought to congratulate myself on being able to be indifferent to both their blandishments and their coquetries. * * *

1902, JULY 6.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have been doing a good deal of new work lately. I have written a number of nature poems which I think as good as my best and which I am sure will please you. I am feeling about the same. No better and no worse. My condition is at a standstill. * * * I do not know why *Kentucky Poems* has not appeared, unless it is that the coronation of King Edward postponed its publication. Not a word have I heard from Gosse, or Richards, the publisher. * * *

1902, JULY 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am glad that you, your wife and little daughter are coming to Louisville on the twenty-ninth. I am sure we shall have a good time again. * * * I am blue about many things. The main one, of course, is my continued bad health * * * and the general futility of all literary work as to poetry, in this wretched world. You can work yourself to death and no attention is paid, or very little, to what you do, perhaps, until you are dead and buried. My life, too, is monotonous. * * *

1902, AUGUST 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Your letter, which I re-inclose to you, from my good friend, Harrison S. Morris, is one to preserve and be proud of. He is a fine poet, one of the best in the East. I have his *Madonna and Other Poems*. He has written some of the finest sonnets that have ever been written in this country, barring none, not even Longfellow's. It is something to have an artist like Morris commend one's work. * * *

1902, SEPTEMBER 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The English volume is certainly a thing of beauty to the eye; I thought that it would please you very much. As to the changes that you condemn in "Frost" and "Unrequited," I am totally to blame for them. I cannot agree with you as to the spoiling of these two poems by the changes I have made in them. "Frost" was such a deplorable amateurish performance that I was going to reject it entirely, but thought better afterwards and cut it down [from ten stanzas] to four or five stanzas, after carefully deliberating on the changes necessary to give it sense and

still leave it poetry. The line which you deplore, "His wand a pot of pounded pearls " is nonsense. How can a wand be a pot? In no conceivable manner can the one be transformed into the other. Besides, a harlequin's wand is supposed to work wonders by its touch alone—it is not used to spread anything on something else, as a brush or knife is. You see I merely contained in this line the figure of the harlequin—frost changing with a touch of his wand the fields and the woods to something "new and strange."

Then in "Unrequited": The last stanza before indicated the man had died as the bird lay dead. This was wrong. The man and the bird did not die; both were simply wounded. The first by the unapproachableness of the maiden desired, his love being unrequited, and the bird by the thorns of the rose, which typed the sharpness of the girls' disapproval of the man's suit. But if I have to explain these things to you and they seem unbeautiful and feebler than the original, then truly I have failed in my purpose which was to make the ideas clearer, more convincing and truer to nature. The best poems in the volume I think you have overlooked: These are "Summer," "To Sorrow," "Night," "The Haunted House," "The Dream" and "The Tollman's Daughter." * * *

1902, October 3.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich: I was glad to receive your kind letter acknowledging the receipt of the volume of mine just published in England. But, my dear Mr. Aldrich, how can you say that Mr. Gosse is wrong about the vitiated public taste in this country for things that are "smart, snappy and wide-awake," instead of for things that are deep, serious and beautiful in verse?—There is hardly a publisher—I really believe there is not one—in this country who will at the present day undertake, at his own expense, the publication of a volume of American poems that are not "smart" and "snappy" or drivel sentimentally or humorously in dialect. There is no call—or at least the call is very slight—for poetry that deals with the eternal contemplation of nature; poetry that makes one think; and one has to bring a certain amount of intellect to the study and the understanding of. At least it is so in this part of the country. I don't know how it is in Boston and New York. But I do know that nearly every young publishing house that devoted itself more or less to the publication of high-class verse in those cities, Boston especially, had to make an assignment. The publishing houses of Eugene Field, James Whitcomb Riley, [Will Carleton] the author of "Betsy and I Are Out," etc., are flourishing and prospering.

Within the past few months I have been confirmed in my belief that serious poetry has had its day in this country; it is wanted

neither by the public nor the publisher; there is no call for it. Mr. Howells had offered to write an introduction for a volume of selections to be brought out in this country at the same time that the volume of selections with Mr. Gosse's introduction was brought out in England. The selections of course were to be entirely different from those in the English volume. But, do you know that even with Mr. Howells' name on the title-page the publishing house with which he is associated absolutely refused to *consider* such a book. Would not even give a reading to the *MS.* It was quite different in England, where, even before the *MS.* was ready to submit to the publisher, the work had been taken simply on Mr. Gosse's endorsement. I have merely stated what has come under my own observation and spoke from my own experience. Very sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1902, October 12.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich: I was very much interested in what you had to say about poetry and its popularity in this country. You are speaking, of course, of the East, of your selection of the States. Now here in the Southwest it seems to me that affairs relative to serious poetry present quite a different appearance. I inquired at our largest bookstore regarding the demand and sales of volumes of poetry and found that even the demand for such standard poets as Longfellow, Tennyson, Whittier, Browning, etc., has fallen off considerably within the past decade. As for the newer writers of verse there is scarcely ever a call for their work—only Stephen Phillips, I think. His plays are in some request, but that probably is because his poetry is presented in a dramatic form, not in lyrical or epical. It might be different if he confined himself to strictly lyrical verse. Kipling, of course, sold, but at present there is no demand for his books of poems. Riley and Eugene Field sell steadily for the same reason that Kipling does—namely "rag-time." As for poets who are doing really serious work, such poets as Bliss Carman, C. D. G. Roberts, Miss Guiney, etc., the book sellers tell me that they never order any of their books to be placed on sale as there is no demand for them. Those that they had supplied their shelves with at one time, including Richard Hovey's works, have long since been relegated to the fifty and twenty-five cent counter, and even there they do not sell.

I do really believe that the younger generation of Americans read less poetry than the younger generation of any other nation on the civilized globe. They are compelled to read a certain amount at school and college, but after their school and college days are over Longfellow and Tennyson are laid away to gather dust, and the modern

hastily-written novel holds complete sway over their intellects. It is the older men and women who still confess a fondness for the poets, living or dead, and interest themselves to a certain degree. What you say about the same condition of affairs prevailing in England gives me small hope for the future of poetry. One has to eat and drink and sleep even if one does write poetry, and if one cannot live thereby one will have to die—or struggle to make a living by something else. Yours most sincerely, Madison Cawein.

1902, October 13.

Mrs. M. P. Ferris: I see in the September number of the *American Author* a notice of a volume of poems, a compilation entitled *Kentucky Poems* published last summer in London, England. Although the author of the volume, myself, I had nothing to do with the selecting of the poems and nothing at all to do with the publishing of the same. Mr. Edmund Gosse proposed voluntarily to make the selection from my various published volumes of verse and to find a publisher for the same. He also proposed writing the introduction, something which he told me in a letter at the time he had never done for any American poet before, although solicited many times by the friends of various Eastern poets to do so.

I wish you would correct the statement in your next issue of *The Author* that "I am bringing out the book" and that I have named it *Kentucky Poems*. Mr. Gosse must have the credit for both of the above facts as well as the preface.

As to the criticisms which you say in your article that *The New York Tribune* alleges are now appearing in England lamenting the weakness of the poems in Mr. Gosse's selection, I will only say that I have before me a letter just received from Mr. Gosse in which he speaks positively of the sympathy and the praise which the volume is receiving at the hands of the critics all over England. I, myself, have seen several of these reviews; one published in the *Academy and Literature* on the 13th of September, a special editorial article which, while it was critical, "lamented" nothing as the *Tribune* alleges, and in its entirety would have afforded delight to the heart of any poet, no matter whom he might be, great or small. However, even if the criticisms were unfavorable, as the *Tribune* alleges, who are these critics, English or American, for that matter? Not one of them holds the position in letters held by Mr. Wm. Dean Howells on this side of the Atlantic, and Mr. Edmund Gosse on the other side. Both of these gentlemen have hitherto found much to praise in my work and are still finding much to praise.

Had you read Mr. Gosse's introduction to *Kentucky Poems*, you would have readily seen that he was bound to make me envious

enemies on this side of the water by the great praise he bestowed upon my work. In fact I look for nothing in this country now, from the hands of the critics, except injustice. Yours truly, Madison Cawein.

[From the original in the collection of William F. Gable.]

1902, October 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Ernest McGaffey called to see me about two weeks ago. He dropped in one morning early. He was passing through Louisville with his wife and some friends and had only an hour or two to give to me. He is a charming and a fine fellow. I like him exceedingly. He has a lovely personality and his wife is a lovely lady. I gave him one or two of my volumes, those that he did not possess, and yesterday received by express his four published volumes, all beautifully autographed. In fact he, at infinite pains, wrote a poem in each one of them for my special pleasure. His *Sonnets to a Wife* I consider a beautiful piece of bookmaking. He tells me it has sold well—some two thousand copies or more. *Poems of the Town* contains, I think, some very powerful poems; all are on sorry and sordid subjects, well written though, and often very dramatic. He is really a poet—a poet of the people though. He writes to me urging me to visit him and his wife in Chicago. * * *

1902, November 13.

James Whitcomb Riley: All of our hearts are overflowing with the laughter of *Joyous Children*, mine first and foremost of them all, and the genial Doctor's and Allison's, after mine. What a beautiful gift, in more ways than one, is that beautiful book to us—to the world in fact. The delight of its summer smile, its sweet and summer laughter will never stale, will never age as we ourselves shall. Every poem in it I have read and re-read with reiterated pleasure, with an appreciation that I cannot tell you in the confines of four sheets of a letter, a brief note.

Ah, my dear old friend, how you *do* get at the heart of a child. No one can interpret the child-heart as you interpret it. You are a past master at that as you are at many other things in poetry. But the most difficult, I think, is this genius of knowing so intimately and so thoroughly the souls of the little ones. You, in your book of *Joyous Children*, make me live over again the days of my childhood, when I, too, was just a little freckled-faced "kid" living back in the hills of Indiana, "the knobs," they call 'em, and walking two and a half miles every day, fall, winter and spring, to the little old district school in the suburbs of New Albany. Your wonderful *art* is not ART,

it is something more for which we have no name—even *inspiration, genius* do not describe it; and lacking words to say exactly what it is, I'll just have to give it up and invent a new term for it which is—*Riley*. Your affectionate friend always, Madison Cawein.

1902, November 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter afforded me great pleasure. I am glad that the poems [*A Voice on the Wind*], most of which you heard me read last summer, bore a careful re-reading. That is a pretty good test. But I am weary of the struggle. I write and toil and worry, and to what end? Everything seems futile and in vain. The world seems lost in the consideration of something else, and something that is far from being poetry. Nobody, except a few dreamers like yourself and myself, wants poetry. Trash suits them better. I expect no justice any more from any critics outside of Mr. Howells and Mr. Gosse. The rest are a devouring pack of demon dogs snarling and snapping at my heels. The book which I expected so much from, that I hoped would turn the tide of criticism in my favor, the *Kentucky Poems* I mean, has scarcely created a ripple, a stir, in the great waters of literature. There is nothing but injustice and disfavor, abuse and ridicule, for me and my work in the newspapers of the East. It hurts the sales of the book even if it does not convince the people—who know and who can appreciate real poetry when they see it—that it is not poetry. Dutton & Company of New York, the American publishers of *Kentucky Poems*, write me that the book is not selling. The reason is very evident: Critics and the public want things, as Mr. Gosse says in his introduction, that are "wide-awake," "smart" and "snappy." There is no encouragement for the class of poetry that I write, and, I fear, never will be. What is the use of keeping on, I ask and re-ask myself. The same history will be repeated in respect to my last book, *A Voice on the Wind*. I know it will either be ignored completely, as *Weeds by the Wall* was, or else abused and ridiculed as that same little volume was by *The New York Sun*. What hope is there for me or any writer of serious verse—nature verse—in the future in this country! None, I fear, especially when he lives in the South, as I do.

I shall attend to the expressing of those twelve copies [*A Voice on the Wind*] today. The book will be on sale the latter part of this week, I believe, but I hardly expect to sell more than a dozen of it, if I sell that many. How many *Kentucky Poems* do you think they sold here in Louisville? One firm sold a half-a-dozen copies; another one exactly ten copies. It's the same old story. Nobody reads poetry nor wants to read it. For my part, I am disinclined to write any more now. Your friend as always and forever, Madison Cawein.

1902, DECEMBER 4.

John Russell Hayes: I was greatly pleased with your article [in *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, November 30, 1902], on *Kentucky Poems*. It is the ablest, the most appreciative criticism my book has as yet received in this country. If you will, I wish that you would mail a copy of it to Mr. Edmund Gosse, No. 17 Hanover Terrace, Regents Park, N. W., London, England.

Mr. Gosse wrote me some two months ago asking me what the critics were saying about the book, "our book," as he puts it. But I was only able to send him the notices that had appeared in our local papers here, which, of course, were favorable. The Eastern press has merely mentioned the book so far, or ignored it. I have seen only one criticism of it and that was an insult to Mr. Gosse as well as to myself. It appeared in *The New York Tribune* which has, together with two or three other papers in New York, always abused my work. It angered me because of the vile attack made upon Mr. Gosse and I wrote an ironical letter to the miserable sheet which the editor had the kindness to publish in full, together with the one to himself. Probably he thought at the time he did so, that he was placing me in a ridiculous attitude, but nothing could have pleased me better. I have ceased reading the alleged criticisms that my books receive from the newspaper critics, both East and West. All they [the newspaper, not magazine critics] know anything about is dialect nonsense and so-called humorous verse. Real poetry is totally unknown to them. Such a criticism as yours, though, I should like very much for Mr. Gosse himself to see; I am sure he would appreciate it as much as I do. * * * The volumes which Mr. William Archer did not see, or read if he saw them, and which I consider my best, are the following: *Intimations of the Beautiful* (which you will recollect Mr. Gosse spoke most highly of in his Introduction to *Kentucky Poems*), *The Garden of Dreams*, *Idyllic Monologues*, a volume of narrative poems, now out of print, *Shapes and Shadows*, and *Weeds by the Wall*. Yesterday I mailed you a copy of my little book, just published, which represents the work I have done within the past year. I am enclosing a sheet, as you requested, with the list of my preferences in *Kentucky Poems*. * * *

My favorite poems in *Kentucky Poems* are as follows: First and foremost, "Summer"; following it in the order named: "To Sorrow," "A Twilight Moth," "Reverie," "The Farmstead," "The Boy Columbus," "A Fallen Beech," "After Rain," "Prologue," the second "October" and "A Dream Shape." Most of the above named poems were suggested or inspired by direct contact with nature and by the reading of poetry—I have forgotten whose. Madison Cawein.

1903, February 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * "Masque of Judgment" is the greatest thing that has been done in this country for many and many a year. William Vaughn Moody's blank verse is as great, if not greater than Stephen Phillips', and he easily surpasses him in imagination. But, like Phillips, he is no lyrist; he cannot write exquisitely musical rhymed verse. When he takes to rhyming he falls down lamentably. But the "Masque of Judgment" is a great poem. I linger wonderingly over it now, reading pages again and again. * * *

1903, March 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The magazines are at last taking notice of my *Kentucky Poems* * * * In the March number of *The Reader* the poet Bliss Carman gives a two page-notice to *Kentucky Poems*—did I say the poems? I was wrong, it is to the Introduction. My name and the poems are mentioned exactly once. But the notice of notices is in the spring number of *The Book Lover*, a beautiful large magazine published in New York. It is written by Professor John Russell Hayes, assistant professor of literature at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania. The article is headed "A Disciple of Keats" and is most beautifully written, besides being one of the unadulterated praises. *Kentucky Poems*, by the way, in spite of all the harsh criticism it has received in this country—induced simply by envy and nothing else on the part of these poet critics of the East—has gone into a second edition in England. * * *

1903, April 23.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am about to change my condition of life. Gertrude McKelvey and I are to be married on the fourth day of June. We have decided that we can be very happy together and so will undertake to be so by the usual method—the altar. Our wedding is to be a very quiet one. No invitations are to be issued, and immediately after the ceremony we leave for Colorado. * * *

1903, April 29.

Miss Anna Blanche McGill: Your lovely letter of congratulation is the first one I have received, and has given me more pleasure than I can tell you in a brief letter or in words.

Indeed, my dear Anna Blanche, I hope that all my girl friends, who have contributed so much to my pleasure heretofore, will not

now consider themselves less my friends in that I am about to make one of their charming coterie my wife. I desire this more sincerely in your case than in that of any of the others. Not only because I have known you longer, but because I feel that our interest in the same art, which is literature, has established, for a long time now, a sincerer bond of friendship and fellowship between us than has been established in the cases of the others. Such friendships, which are the truly Platonic ones, are never broken off entirely and never forgotten.

I hope to establish a home, one of poetry and music—or should the latter precede the former for the sake of harmony?—and to which I, and Gertrude, too, I am sure, will always be more than happy to welcome you and yours. * * *

1903, JUNE 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Your wife's beautiful present of lace arrived yesterday and Gertrude went into ecstasy over it. * * * Last night Dr. Cottell gave us a perfectly beautiful dinner at the Pendennis Club. Fifteen were present, including Reverend R. Estill of St. Paul's Episcopal church who is to marry us on Thursday. We will look for you at the depot [in St. Louis] Thursday at 6.36 P. M. * * * [A dinner was given by Mr. Gibson at the Planters Hotel, St. Louis, on the evening of the fourth.]

1903, JUNE 4:

Mr. and Mrs. John F. McKelvey announce the marriage of their daughter, Gertrude Foster, to Mr. Madison J. Cawein, Thursday, June the fourth, nineteen hundred and three, Louisville, Kentucky. At home after July tenth, 105 West Burnett.

1903, JUNE 16, MANITOU, COLORADO.

James Whitcomb Riley: Well, here I am at the foot of Pike's Peak, in the heart of the Rockies, with the loveliest and sweetest girl in the world, spending my honeymoon. I have thought of you many a time during our jaunts among the cañons and cliffs, watching the mists gather and descend on the mountain heights, or gathering wild flowers, of which there is a vast profusion as well as variety, among the heaven-kissing hills, or sitting wondering by some mountain-torrent flinging its wild waters down the bouldered sides of a

precipice in many a foaming and roaming cascade; like some snow-white nymph tossing her arms of foam above her head and flaunting her wild hair of spray to the music of the wind-rocked pines.

Riley, you must not forget me now I have "done gone and got married." My wife is a beautiful, a talented girl; a singer as well as a musician; a reader of the best literature and appreciative of the best poetry, present and past. She has read your work, as every one has, and is full of enthusiasm for it. She is a girl of mind as well as soul, and to the home on Burnett Street, in Louisville, she will be only too glad to welcome you whenever you deign to favor us with a visit.

I have furnished a home and intend making it one of music and poetry, and hope that you will not forget that the latch-string is hanging out, away out, for you at any time you see fit to find and pull it. Your affectionate friend, Madison Cawein.

1903, JUNE 21, MANITOU COLORADO.

Dr. Henry A Cottell: * * * We have been to Cripple Creek, to Monument Park, and to North Cheyenne Cañon, also to The Cascades, up Ute Pass since last I wrote you. The scenery along the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad is indescribably magnificent. We wound round and round the Rockies, for miles, at an altitude of over ten thousand feet, looking down upon gulch and mountain torrent, ravine and cañon crowded with pines and dwarf oaks, and foaming with cataracts; looking up at crag and cliff and precipice, crown'd with cedar and tortured pine and bush, and often hurling its foaming stream, like a trailing veil of thinnest lawn from its huge shoulders of gray or red granite. As we approached Cripple Creek, far away, along the horizon, under the wild interchange and shifting lights of storm and sun, stretching, as it were, into infinity, the barriers of the world, crowned with everlasting snow, we beheld the vast range of the Sangre de Christo Mountains A sight I shall never forget. Now glittering and now dim, now vague and now massed in splendor, under the shifting gleams and glooms of the now shining and now threatening heavens. These mountains of the Great Divide beckoned and lured like great, low radiantly white clouds of sunset lands.

Cripple Creek is the most God-forgotten place on earth. With its mountain sides filled with little or large cavities, digged by the gold-prospectors in the "fierce race for wealth." Ruin it proves and has proven too often.

Last week we went up Pike's Peak, and truly felt ourselves very much up in the world: The view from this height is something indescribable. The cloud-effects would have baffled Ruskin himself to describe. The snow was, in places, some eight feet deep, and before

we went up the snow plow had to be brought into use. It was very cold and disagreeable and came on to rain before we descended. It was an experience, however, that I would not have missed for the world.

We have met many charming people here, appreciative of poetry and music, and we have often thought how nice it would be to have the dear old Doctor with us to entertain them as well as ourselves, with apt quotations from the poets. For instance, last night when we all picnicked on a mountain-top back of the hotel, under the sunset and the stars, with Pike's Peak in the back-ground. How lovely it would have been to have had you by us on the rocks, near to the great roaring, gusty fire of pine boughs, drinking delicious coffee, and eating delicious lamb chops, boiled and broiled over the fragrant fire of pine. Until late into the night we sat there wrapped in cloaks and overcoats, on the rocks around the fire, under the taciturn and glittering stars, telling ghost stories.

Again it would have been nice to have had you with us when we rode last Friday some twelve miles or more through a lonely country of rocks and prairie, through the mesa, beyond the Garden of the Gods to Monument Park, with its strange and fantastically weird rocks, shaped like great mushrooms and gigantic toadstools, each with its tapering stem of white sandstone, often eighty feet high, and its top of red sandstone, often ten and twenty feet in circumference. Here under the pines we picnicked and "loafed and invited our souls." The land is a blur of wild flowers. Great carmine dabs of Indian warrior pinks, and yellow dashes and daubs of a golden flower I know not the name of; streaks of the wild geraniums, pink as sea-shells and blue bells of the mertensia, and purple stocks, and wide, transparently white and tender pink strips of the primroses, as large at times as a tea-saucer, and growing low on the ground. * * *

1903, June 24, Manitou, Colorado.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I wish you could be with us on our jaunts to the various places around Manitou and Colorado Springs. The magnificent mountain scenery! The cañons, the natural parks, the gorges and gulches! * * * But I find myself longing for simpler scenery, more pastoral, more peaceful. I shall be glad to get back home once more, back to Old Kentucky. * * *

1903, August 10.

James Whitcomb Riley: My dear good friend and playmate, "Bud Riley"—*The Book of Joyous Children*, in its green cover of limp leather,—the color so suggestive of joy,—containing the loveliest of all inscriptions to my unworthy self, has been received.

A hundred thousand thanks! Ah, old friend, you are too good to me! The poem first and now the new edition of the book are too many drops in my cup of happiness! I must retaliate in some way! in kind!—I have no new book, or new edition of a book, to fire at your devoted and laureled head, but here goes for a poem. Can and will you stand for it?

To Old Bud Riley

Over the railfence of the years,
That climbs and crumbles between our lands,
Old Bud Riley, I stretch my hands
Full of my love, so it appears
As the boy's young hands that once you knew,
Filled with my boyhood's love of you,
Swift to laughter and quick to tears.
The same old love that once you knew
When you and I went wandering through
Song's flowery fields, despite her frown,
And piped to our sweetheart, freckled and brown,
Sweet Country Muse, in homespun gown,
Who smiled upon you, then on me again,
As we tuned our reeds in the sun and rain,
Far from the crowd and the deafening town,
Boys, just boys in Song's Domain.

Yours with all my heart's friend-and-fellow-ship, Madison Cawein.

[Six lines were added, and the poem published in *The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*. Cawein retained a copy of the original poem by writing it on a flyleaf of *The Book of Joyous Dreams*, opposite Riley's inscription which reads:
"To Madison Cawein, Esq., with hale affection of his boisterous little playmate—Bud Riley. August 5, 1903.

Little Boy! Halloo! Halloo!
Can't you hear me calling you?
Little Boy that Used to Be,
Come in here and play with me!"

Cawein's copy of Riley's book inscribed by the two poets is now in the Collection of William F. Gable.]

1903, September 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * It will be delightful to have you here when the forests have put on all their scarlet and gold magnificence. * * * I am writing a little, but it seems I can get nothing accepted any more. I wonder if it is due to the fact that I am a married man now, and need more money than I did when I was a single man? It looks that way. * * *

1903, October 20.

Charles Hanson Towne: Here is a poem of some length on a subject which Tennyson has made famous, Mariana of Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure." I have worked very hard over this piece and tried to make it worthy of its great model. I have treated it differently from the manner in which Tennyson treated it; his, as you may remember, deals with the heat and the languor of mid-summer, the drought that burnt the land up and sickened Mariana's heart unutterably. I have dealt with a different phase of nature, rain and mist and fog and the sorrow of approaching autumn. I hope that the poem will meet with your favor and be retained for publication in the *Smart Set*. * * * [Published in *Smart Set*, March, 1905].

1903, November 25.

James Whitcomb Riley: Gibson, R. E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis, dropped in on us at 105 West Burnett yesterday and we talked a good deal about old "Bud Riley;" discussed his books, his pictures, the caricature one particularly—which my cousin Fred colored for me and I have had framed;—and last, not least, the beautiful poem written to me on my marriage, which I also have framed and hanging up in my study. Well, old man, we devoted a good deal of time to you and yours, and only wished to have you with us. If you would only drop in on us, even if it were only for an hour or two, how overjoyed it would make me. I have one of the loveliest, most charming, as well as talented wives, in the world, and she would make it interesting with music and talk for you as well as the rest of us.

Gibson, at last, has severed his connection with the St. Louis Insane Asylum and has been made Secretary for a Mining Company, at a better salary. He is in a better position now to do better work, I think. His wife and little daughter, Elaine Cawein Gibson, are with him, the latter my namesake, as you will observe.

Doctor Cottell and I wanted to run up to see you last month but—you know how things happen, we didn't happen to do it. Have you seen *The Literary Guillotine?* Among the other poets decapitated is one who bears my name. How did you come to escape? and old Joaquin, too? And so the whirligig of time goes on. Ever your affectionate friend, Madison J. Cawein.

1903, December 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I want to thank you for the gift [*Dante and his Times* and many other books] which added so much to the joy of our Christmas. This Christmas has indeed been the happiest

I ever passed, and Gertrude, too, says the same. Our little home looked lovely, decorated with holly and mistletoe. Friends kept coming and going—and presents also—till the excitement of it all waxed fever-high. We spent the evening at the Cottells', and had a merry time. The Doctor was in his best mood and we had plenty of music as well as poetry. * * *

1904, February 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am almost too busy to write to you now. * * * A gentleman interested in books, and a publisher at one time, has proposed to me recently the publication of a uniform edition of my poems, in ten or twelve volumes superbly illustrated, printed and bound, he procuring the publisher bearing the expense; and to be sold only on subscription. * * * The *MMS.* for the first two volumes are already in his hands; the third I am busy on now. [After a number of unforeseen complications were overcome, the uniform edition appeared in 1907, in five volumes, entitled *The Poems of Madison Cawein.*]

1904, March 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I feel as if I had lost a portion of myself with you away, off in Mexico, and me here in Kentucky. * * * Great changes have come into our household. A boy was born to us on the night of the eighteenth. * * * We have named him Preston Hamilton Cawein. * * *

1904, August 2.

Eric Pape: * * * *Accolon of Gaul* I consider my best piece of narrative work, and when I wrote it I attempted to paint in it a series of sumptuous word-pictures that some great artist, some day, like yourself, might be pleased to give real, artistic form to. As Mr. Howells remarked in a review of the volume, first published in 1889, I often "hand my readers the pallet instead of a picture." In revising the poem for the Complete Edition I have, I think, corrected this to some extent. I know that the pictures which you are engaged upon for this volume will be superb; they can not help but be with such an artist and such a model as you tell me you have engaged.

Mr. Howells was my first admirer and did more to encourage me than any other man, woman, or child in the world at the time when I needed encouragement most. I shall never forget it, or cease to be grateful to him for all the kind things he has said, innumerable times, about my work. * * *

1904, NOVEMBER 21.

James Whitcomb Riley: Gertrude and I are intending to drop in on you Sunday next at Indianapolis. She has always been very desirous of meeting the great Hoosier poet and we are going to take advantage of the meeting of the executive committee of the Western Association of Writers—of which I am one of the officers—on the twenty-seventh, to visit Indianapolis and, incidentally and very particularly,—your kind and genial self. We shall have to leave the boy, Preston, at home, not being of an age to travel and call on our friends as yet. We shall be at the Claypool Hotel and hope that you will not forget to call or let us call on your loyal self.

Between you and me, it is not the W. A. W. that is bringing us to Indianapolis, but your dear old self. I am just "honing" to see you again and have a chat; and my wife, Gertrude, is in a somewhat similar state. Do not disappoint us now, for we are surely coming, and along with us a lot of greetings from many of your friends in Louisville. Your old friend, Madison J. Cawein.

P. S. Under separate envelope I send you a picture of both the wife and the boy. It was taken some five months ago and does not do either one of them justice. Both are far better looking than the photograph presents them. You will be able to judge of this in the case of the former on Sunday next. M. J. C.

1904, DECEMBER 1.

James Whitcomb Riley: Gertrude and I are still talking about the good time we had in Indianapolis and about your kindness and Mrs. Holstein's. That is a trip which neither of us will ever forget, and to commemorate it, now come your two lovely souvenirs—the portrait of your poetical self and the volume of *Out to Old Aunt Mary's*. The portrait is the best I have ever seen of you. It is fine. And we are gladder than glad to have it to place in our library. The book, with its beautiful illustrations, is one of the loveliest things I ever handled; and the poem—what can I say of the poem with its additional stanzas? It is a thing of beauty and a joy forever, truly. The old-fashioned sort of a truly American idyl, such as goes right to the heart and, like the face of Christ on the napkin, is stamped there forever.

You have no idea how much pleasure this book,with its beautiful drawings and more beautiful stanzas, has given to us. There is not a page, not a line that we have not read and re-read and lingered over and loved. You are certainly the poet of this generation whose work shall never grow stale even in the generations to come. * * *

1905, AUGUST 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: After more than a year, at last a letter [from Mexico] from you. But I am not going to fuss at you now that you have written. I am sorry, very sorry to hear of your wanderings, your trials, your disappointments. I hope that they will soon cease and that you will be your own old self again. Why don't you come up to Louisville for a few days and give us all a chance at you? Come up, and now while the weather is lovely we can go for long jaunts in the woods and talk it all over. I have had my disappointments, too. The books [the uniform edition in ten volumes] that were to appear with so much elegance and distinction have not appeared. The man who was to undertake their publication * * * promises to take up the work again * * * but I have little hope of seeing the magnificent edition. * * *

I have published a volume of new poems [*The Vale of Tempe*] which will be out on September first. This book contains some of my very best work, I think. I expect great things from it—not in the way of money—that is a hopeless hope for any modern poet, I think—but from the literary magazines, men and journals. * * *

1905, SEPTEMBER 5.

John Wilson Townsend: I will answer your questions as briefly as possible. * * * I wrote verse when attending high school; used to read it from the chapel rostrum. Wrote all my declamations in verse, every bit of which was destroyed afterwards. Wrote enough while at school to fill two large volumes; destroyed two-thirds of it after selecting my first volume, *Blooms of the Berry*, from the mass. * * * I have in hand a volume of prose and verse entitled "Vagabond Papers" [*Nature Notes and Impressions*] which will appear some time next year. * * * My favorite poem is "The Twilight Moth." * * * Poetry I define as the metrical or rhythmical expression of the emotions, occasioned by the sight or the knowledge of the beautiful and the noble in ourselves. I was christened in the German Lutheran Church, but am a member of no church. [The "German Lutheran Church" referred to by Mr. Cawein is the St. Paul's Evangelical Church of Louisville. Its Book of Baptismal Records, then written in German, contains the following entry, here quoted in full: "A. D., 1865: On the 23rd of April, in the evening at 5 o'clock, there was born unto William Cawein and his wife, Christiana, nee Stelsly, a son; and on the 22nd of June of the same year he was baptized, whereupon he received the name Madison Julius; the sponsor was Julie Cawein, the pastor Carl Ludwig Daubert." According to the Family Bible and other records, Cawein was born on

the 23rd of March—not on the 23rd of April as recorded in this church book. He was baptized on his mother's birthday—the day she was twenty-six years old. "Julie" Cawein, the sponsor, was Mrs. Julia Stelsly Cawein, wife of Daniel Cawein. He was called Madison in honor of President James Madison. In 1855, when Cawein's parents were married, the Reverend Daubert officiated at the wedding.]

1905, September 11.

Mrs. Richard W. Knott: I was greatly pleased to learn from your letter that you had noted an advance in my art—over that of my preceding books—in this my latest volume, *The Vale of Tempe.*

The editorial notice in last Saturday's Louisville *Evening Post* which, I suppose, was of your writing, pleased me very much also. It is such words as yours and your husband's that stimulate and encourage one, like myself, who finds so little to encourage in the attitude of the newspapers towards modern poetry. * * *

1905, October 4.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich: You have my deepest sympathy. I had not heard of your recent loss. Words are feeble to express what one would say—such an affliction makes all language worthless. If we were to lose our little boy—who is now nearly nineteen months old—I would not care to live any longer. Your loss makes my heart sore. But, as a friend of mine, a great physician here said to me once—"the wonder is not that we do not die, but that we live as long as we do."

I was pleased to hear that you liked some of the poems in my last volume, and thank you for your kind words of praise. * * * Very sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1905, October 25.

James Whitcomb Riley: I suppose that you are back of the beautiful notice of my last volume, *The Vale of Tempe*, in the November number of *The Reader*. If you are not, you probably know who wrote it and can hand this letter of thanks over to the editor to be delivered to the man, or maid, who is so kindly disposed toward my last efforts. I was particularly pleased to note the poems in the volume which appealed to this generous reviewer—the troubadour poems and "Mariana." I spent a great deal of time over, and gave more pains to, those poems than, I believe, I gave to any of the rest.

They are, therefore, more dear to me, perhaps, than any of the others. Perhaps, I say. Although the English poets seem to prefer others, Arthur Symons, from whom I have lately heard, liking "The Old Herb Man" and "The Wood Water;" and Andrew Lang, the poems in the forepart of the volume and the Fairy pieces. Arthur Symons writes me beautifully from Cornwall, and Andrew Lang from Inverary, Scotland. Both of them speak highly of the book, and both of them are good critics.

Gertrude—who sends you her love and best wishes—and I start for the East Monday. We go to Washington, New York, Philadelphia and Boston and expect to be away a month. We leave our little boy, Preston Hamilton, with his grandparents at home. You should see him now! He is *her* living image and just as bright and charming as his mother is. If you saw him you *would not* write a poem to him, oh no! but you would dedicate a whole volume of children poems to him. Your old friend, Madison Cawein.

1905, November 5, Philadelphia.

Dr. Henry A. Cottell: Well, *veni, vidi, vici*; we came, we saw, we—have done things, not literary, but social. The President is a wonderful man. He took powerful possession of us and simply insisted on our staying over a day in Washington to meet his wife and to take lunch with him. The Attorney General of the United States, the Assistant Secretary of State, and the new Minister to Ecuador were also present, besides two or three others whose names I forget. The President talked of poetry eloquently and quoted it profusely. He quoted from my poem "Noera," to be found in *Poems of Nature and Love*, a poem which, he says, has been a favorite of his wife and himself for years, ever since his wife cut it from a paper and placed it in her scrap book; she, Mrs. Roosevelt, told us they read it over, or quoted from it every autumn, she and the President liked it so. The President also likes "Indian Summer" very much and quoted with much gusto the first lines of that poem—"The dawn is a warp of fever," etc. It is one of your favorites, too, I believe. All in all, our stay in Washington was beautiful. The young Secretary of the Mexican Embassy, Don Jose Castellott, gave us a dinner and took us for a long drive around the beautiful suburbs of Washington. He is a poet in his own country, Mexico, and is now writing a play in verse. He is already the author of a successful play that ran for 40 nights in the City of Mexico, and also of a novel. He is only 25 years of age.

In Philadelphia we have met with an equally delightful social and literary time. Harrison S. Morris, the finest poet in the East, and formerly editor of *Lippincott's Magazine*, now head of the Art Department of the Curtis Publishing Company, they publish the *Ladies Home Journal*, you know.

Harrison Morris took me to lunch at the Authors' Club where I met a number of publishers, editors and novelists—no poets, however, as there are but two here, Harrison S. Morris and Doctor Weir Mitchell, author of *Hugh Wynne*. We called afterward on Doctor Weir Mitchell who greeted us beautifully. He is a great man, one of the greatest in the country, both as a literary man and a physician. He showed us the *MS.* of a new book of poems just completed and made me a present of his latest volume, *Complete Poems*, just published in England. Read his last poem in the November *Century*. Gertrude and I then left with Mr. Morris for his home at Oaklane, seven or eight miles from Philadelphia, and yet in the city though all is country, magnificent country, around it. He has a beautiful home, a lovely wife, a perfectly sweet and beautiful little girl six years old. He married the daughter of Joseph Wharton, who is a multi-millionaire. Their homes and grounds show it. Clipped yews and cypresses, lakes, willowed and beeched, and showing here and there an Italian statue in the foliage, queer busts on strange pedestals. Mr. Wharton is a remarkable man, not only in finance, but in his love and appreciation of literature, poetry particularly, all of which, it seems, he has read. We were his guests yesterday and dined with him in magnificent state. He simply fell in love with Gertrude, as also did the President, at both of whom, I think, she made eyes. She is a beautiful girl and they are men of taste. I am proud of her. She looks fine.

Mr. Wharton is related to Edith Wharton, the novelist; also very closely to the Wisters who all live here. Owen Wister, the author of *The Virginian*, is one of the family. We saw his wife, a lovely little woman, still very young. Joseph Wharton is eighty years old and is still active in business in spite of all his millions—he is in the steel manufacturing business; his plant in New Jersey competes with Carnegie's. He has met and known the greatest men in our literature; been intimate with Emerson, Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier and Holmes, of whom he tells, charmingly, many anecdotes. He took us for a long, long ride yesterday in his magnificent equipage through this noble and beautiful landscape, so dotted with palatial homes. For hours we drove along the Wissihickon, clipped and wooded, in all its autumn glory, and showing here and there a ruined mill or bridge near sombre forest of hemlock.

It all seems so unreal. Both Gertrude and myself are in a sort of daze over it all—the grandeur, the wealth and the honor. I fear we will wake up and find it all a dream and ourselves back at home in humdrum quarters on Burnett Avenue.

Love to all. Gertrude sends love to you, your wife and the rest. Remember us to Miss Anna Blanche McGill and Miss Josephine McGill, please, and also to Miss Kate Minett and Miss Emma Griffith. Madison Cawein.

1905, November 20, New York.

R. E. Lee Gibson: It has been one continuous round of dinners, luncheons and receptions since we returned to New York from Boston. We were at Richard Watson Gilder's last Friday for dinner; after dinner the people poured in—poets especially. John Burroughs, the gray naturalist and poet, was there, and he and I had a long and pleasant talk; William Vaughan Moody, the poet, who, so many say is our greatest writer, and Edward Arlington Robinson, whom the President praised in the *Outlook*, were also there. So were Ridgely Torrence and Hamlin Garland, and many others I do not recall this moment.

At Orison S. Marden's, editor of *Success*, and at Robert Underwood Johnson's, one of the *Century* editors, we met the great Markham, Edwin of "The Man with the Hoe." He is a noble looking man and he took to me and I to him. He was most warm and cordial in his praise and talk of my poems. We also met that queer poet of funny things, now so much in vogue, Wallace Irwin.

We called on Frank Dempster Sherman, also on Professor W. T. Trent. Clinton Scollard called on us yesterday, and so did Ridgely Torrence. I saw Richard Le Gallienne at his apartment, and liked him very much; with his great mop of hair and thin, pale, smooth face he looks the poet more than any of them I met. We have seen a great deal of Bliss Carman. He is the same good fellow I met ten years ago.

In Boston we met a number of literary folks, including John Townsend Trowbridge, Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Josephine Preston Peabody. We had a most enjoyable time. I am sorry we could not see Thomas Bailey Aldrich; he had not returned from the country. * * *

1905, November 20, New York.

Preston H. Cawein [aged twenty months]: My darling little Kitsie: Dada is coming home. He will be home Wednesday night at 8 o'clock and be glad of it because he will see his dear little Kitsie again. He is bringing a lot of toys along with him for his sweet little boy, and among them is a choo-choo which was bought especially for him in New York. It is the kind of a choo-choo that little boys usually travel on when they go to Fairyland. Tell Grandma that Mama has stayed on in New York for several weeks longer to take vocal lessons from Mr. Victor Harris * * * until the 8th of December. Kiss Grandma and Grandpa for Mama and Dada. Your loving Dada, Madison.

1905, December 5.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * My books, the ten-volume edition, still hang fire. * * * I saw the artists in the East: Eric Pape in Boston, and Orson Lowell, B. West Clinedinst and Thure de Thulstrup in New York. * * * The pictures that are finished are masterpieces. I hope that the agent will see his way clear to go on with the work now. [Shortly after this the agent then promoting the proposed ten volumes withdrew, and in the edition eventually printed, no illustrations except those by Eric Pape were used.]

1906, February 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Mr. Doerr's death was a great shock to us. [He was brought to Louisville from Colorado Springs on February 10, with very little hope of his recovery]. * * * He was a strong man, a good, a noble man, not old, and he had to go. Mother [Mrs. Doerr], was in Florida and arrived in Louisville early the Sunday morning on which he died, and he had been dead only an hour or so when she reached his bedside. I had to break the news to her and my sister. * * * Such grief, such horror! God grant that I may never have such news to break to loving hearts again in my life. I, too, was and still am all unstrung. * * *

1906, April 22.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have not yet gotten over the San Francisco horror [earthquake April 18, 1906]. It affects me financially, as I have nearly all my money in stock in the City Railway out there. * * *

1906, May 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: You should be in Kentucky now to roam the May-time hills with me. Nowhere in the world, I am sure, can there be anything lovelier and balmier than are our weather and our woods here in old Kentucky. * * *

I have been corresponding with my friend, Yone Noguchi, Tokyo, Japan, the Japanese poet. He is publishing a volume of new poems in Tokyo, and a month or two ago wrote me requesting that I write an introduction for it, though I have never done such a thing before. He is full of enthusiasm and has taken to publishing my poems—from

various volumes of mine he has—in a quarterly magazine he and several other Japanese poets are getting out in Tokyo. He promises me a copy of the paper when it is published. * * *

I am correcting the proofs of my new book, *Nature Notes and Impressions*, which are coming in slowly. The prose and poetry in it show up pretty well, and, for the main part, stand the test of all tests—the reading in cold type. * * *

1906, August 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * My *Nature Notes and Impressions* will be out the last of this week. I am as anxious to see this book as a child is to see a new toy. There are things in it so intimately near to my heart that in some ways I feel the book is more mine than any I have ever written. * * *

1906, August 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I think *Nature Notes and Impressions* is a very pretty looking book, in its make-up, but am more and more uncertain about its contents—whether I did right in publishing the stuff. Some of the prose and some of the verse, I am sure, is good. But then the work is, I fear, too fragmentary, and the subjects often too amateurish, the treatment too much that of an apprentice. I am sorry now that I did not wait until after my death and leave the book to be published by my literary executors. Write me your candid opinion about it. Be critical. * * *

I think that the gift of poetry is entirely gone from me. I write no more and have no more inclination to write. I think I am determined to give up the ungrateful task altogether. I shall get out my complete edition and cry quits to the muse. I am not joking; I am serious about it. Song is gone from me. * * *

1906, August 26.

Mrs. Richard W. Knott: I was greatly pleased to see your appreciative editorial of my last book in the Louisville *Evening Post* yesterday. Also to receive your note of a few days ago regarding the book. When I undertook the arrangement and publication of these *Nature Notes* I did not know but that I was making a mistake. It seemed to me to be an experiment more or less doubtful. All fragmentary work is less sure of succeeding than is a work welded into a complete whole. But this work of mine had virtually written itself. And I am glad to know now that I was not so far wrong about its proving of some interest to certain lovers of nature like yourself. In that it has served its purpose. * * *

1906, September 8.

James Whitcomb Riley: I have somewhat impatiently waited a word from you regarding my last volume, *Nature Notes*, sent to you early last month. Is anything the matter? Are you ill? The reason I ask is I find your picture fallen from the wall beside my desk this morning on coming into my study. No reason why it should be lying on its face in front of my desk, when its original, I hope, is still standing upright and whole in God's free air and sunlight where he shall continue to stand for many more goodly years. Your old friend, Madison Cawein.

1906, October 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I send a copy of this month's *South Atlantic Quarterly* containing an article by Anna Blanche McGill on my poetry. I think that you will like this article. It is the finest and the ablest, I think, ever written about my work. It does not cover the entire field of my production however; the narrative and dramatic poems are merely mentioned. It seems that no one cares for those things in my poetry which I care most for—"Accolon of Gaul," "An Old Tale Retold," "Gloramone," "Lyanna," "The Lady of Verne" etc., etc. I wonder why? Are they not worthy of consideration? Do you think so? * * *

1906, November 12.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich: Some weeks ago came your pleasant letter regarding my *Nature Notes*, and Saturday your beautiful play *Judith of Bethulia*. I do not know how to begin to tell you what pleasure I have been getting out of the reading of this really great play; so full of the glamour of old poetry and passion. The second act contains some of the finest passages you have ever written, and throughout the work you show that simplicity of style, that sumptuous diction, direct and poetic, full of fine metaphor as well as music, that have characterized all your work. I had read many years ago your poem "Judith;" afterward the elaborated "Judith,"—both of which are exceedingly fine, but I was not prepared for the dramatic intensity of your play *Judith* by them, although I should have been, it is true, as they, too, are intensely dramatic, but in a different way.

I note what *The New York Times* has to say of you and your poetry in the last number and heartily endorse all it says. What a really magnificent sonnet that one is that is quoted. But you have written so many magnificent ones when one comes to count them up. Very sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1906, DECEMBER 9.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am feeling wretched this morning after a banquet last night at the Galt House given to Henry Watterson who is leaving for Europe. Some 350 men attended. Speeches were made, among them one by Riley who wrote and read an original poem for the occasion. I was with Riley and W. C. Bobbs the better part of yesterday, and shall be with them again today. * * *

1907, JANUARY 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The two letters [on the death of Mrs. Gibson] from Thomas Bailey Aldrich and his wife are beautiful and should console you more than anything in the world. He is unquestionably our greatest living poet. Nothing academic about him as there is about nearly all the other poets writing in the East.

George E. Woodberry is about the worst [the most academic]; although Van Dyke and a Chicago critic on *The Dial* by the name of Payne, give the first place in American poetry [living poets] to William Vaughn Moody and Woodberry. This seems ridiculous to me, when Aldrich is still living.

You never know what is going to happen when you make a change. Probably, had you never gone to Mexico your wife would still be living. But who knows? We are in God's hands. He makes or unmakes us. As I grow older the world seems to grow sadder—not the world, but life, I suppose. Partings must come to us all, and I dread the day when any one of my loved ones has to leave me or I, them. * * *

1907, FEBRUARY 28, NEW YORK.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Here we are in New York once more among the poets and amusements. We are having quite a strenuous time of it. Gertrude and I attended the National Arts Club banquet last night, given on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Longfellow. Quite a crowd of poets was there. Fully three hundred people participated and enjoyed the exercises. Cale Young Rice, Robert Burns Wilson, James Lane Allen and I represented Kentucky. All the poets you ever heard of and now living in this country were present—all except Thomas Bailey Aldrich and William Dean Howells, both of whom are ill.

Bliss Carman, William Vaughn Moody, Ridgely Torrence and Edwin Markham all looked very familiar to me. Moody, it is said, has made a great deal of money out of his play, *The Great Divide*,

the best play of the season. He and Torrence are going to the wilds of Africa next week, for new inspiration, I suppose. * * * Torrence has out a new play, *Abelard and Heloise*, a copy of which he has kindly presented to me. Dr. Henry Van Dyke and George E. Woodberry are two good poets we enjoyed meeting. Florence Earle Coates and Edith M. Thomas pleased us. A most interesting man was Moncure D. Conway. We also met Carolyn Wells, and the Lord only knows whom else. If I stopped and tried to tell you about all the poets here I would not get through before night. * * *

1907, March 7, New York.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We return to Louisville tomorrow and will be glad to be home again after a most strenuous two weeks. * * * Called on Mr. Howells and had a charming chat. * * * At Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse's we met Gertrude Hall, Anna Hempstead Branch, Florence Wilkinson and several others. * * * There certainly was a crowd and crush of novelists and poets in the city. The New York editors do not have to depart outside their own city for material sufficient to keep their magazines going from one year's end to the other. The tribe of writers here is legion. I never saw so many, and never in my life was so tired of meeting them. * * *

1907, March 12.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Looking back over our trip to the East, I can not say that I enjoyed myself greatly. I was glad to get home again from all the insincerity and artificiality of that great metropolitan life. It is true we met all the great poets there, except one or two, but the one who pleased me most and seemed the most wholesome was Edwin Markham. He is a rough diamond and brimming over with enthusiasm for his work, and incidentally mine also. Most of the other poets did not seem to care much about poetry—was it merely an affectation?—and did not strike me as being occupied with their art to the exclusion of everything else. But Markham did. We met him and his wife two or three times. Richard Watson Gilder and Robert Underwood Johnson, too, are men and poets whom we saw much of and liked greatly. But, as I said, we are glad to be home again. * * *

1907, March 21.

Mrs. Thomas Bailey Aldrich: The death of Mr. Aldrich has been a great shock to me. I wish to extend to you the sympathy of myself and Mrs. Cawein. So kind, so considerate, so great. I can

never forget the reception I received one Easter Sunday from Mr. Aldrich and yourself. Never can I forget his words of kindly encouragement to me on frequent occasions. My heart goes out to you in this your bereavement as does the heart of every poet and lover of poetry in the land; for the loss is not only yours but is that of the entire country. Very truly yours, Madison Cawein.

1907, MARCH 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I'll take pleasure in reading your last letter to my mother—but mother, as you probably know—is almost an invalid now—never gives seances any more, never clairvoyants. Since the sudden shock of Mr. Doerr's death she has been bordering on nervous prostration. She is always ailing, never well. It worries us no little to see her in this condition. But I will speak to her of your desire in regard to your wife, who, I am certain, is near you and your little girl often and often, and her influence is disseminated around you to help, to relieve, to comfort you; so spiritualism teaches, and it is true.

Mr. Aldrich is dead. Good, true, beautiful poet. His passing was very lovely and in harmony with his life and his thought. His works remain. An array of perfect poems and several perfect stories, that no age and no man shall surpass. His memory will be kept green forever through his beautiful poems and his stories.

I met two ladies in John P. Morton's the other day. They were purchasing some of my books, and the clerk must needs introduce me. They were from Memphis, Tennessee. In the course of conversation, one of them, whose name I do not remember, remarked that one of the lyrics that had given her the greatest pleasure was one in *The Garden of Dreams*, about a baby, she didn't remember the name, but she had frequently transcribed or copied it and given copies of it to friends, and had mailed the other lady then present, a copy of the poem only recently. I suggested that it might be "Baby Mary," the poem written about your little girl, Elaine, and she said, "Yes, that is its name." I thought that this little episode would interest you, coming as it does so unexpectedly and so appreciatively from a total stranger.

We are all well. Preston recovered beautifully from his measles. He had a birthday last week—three years old—and I, one yesterday. He said to me last night—the Cottells were over to dinner and we spoke of you—Preston said, "Papa, where do the birthdays come from? and where do they go when they're gone?" Your friend, Madison.

1907, April 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Last December I became a member of the Pendennis Club, at which, you may recollect, you and Riley and I dined, with one or two others, several years ago. It is the first club in Kentucky, and I thought it behooved me to be a member of it, as it gives a man a certain position in a community to be a member of a good club. * * *

I have written no poetry for a long, long time and do not know when the Muse will return again to take up her abode with me. My books [*The Poems of Madison Cawein*, in 5 volumes], however, are progressing. I hope to have the first volume ready for subscribers about the middle of May. They will be large books, each of them five hundred pages and over. I know I shall be severely criticised for retaining so much of my work in this complete edition. I have omitted some fifty poems and all the German translations [*The White Snake*]. * * *

I wish you could come to Louisville this spring for a week or two. I should like to have a long, quiet time with you: to talk over things and loaf and invite our souls. I have no companionable spirits, souls, in this community to quietly loaf and talk with. It seems that as the years go by friends are harder to make, or we are harder to please, and one finds himself turning ever and ever to the old friends. Doctor Cottell is a good friend of mine, but he is too busy with his profession, busier than ever before, and I seldom see him unless I call on him. I feel at a loss for male companionship more and more as the years go by—that companionship of similar interests that makes life worth living.

I feel that two of the authors who used to be good friends of mine, recently have come to envy and avoid me merely from the fact that I have achieved somewhat more than they have. God knows it is not worth envying as I see it, but they think it is, especially one of them, whose antipathy is very marked. I am an older man, I have worked longer and harder than any writer in this vicinity and have wrung recognition from the writers and readers of this country through some merit, however little, and through persistence. They have had the same chance as I had, and still have it; that the greatest writers and critics have not recognized them as they have me is not a fault of mine. They, in time, may accomplish more than I have and surely when that time comes I shall not envy them what they have attained. But, as I said, it seems that the more recognition I get, the more enemies I create. I feel this; am sure of it. Gertrude, too, feels it and suffers from it. She, a noble, beautiful soul is far above, spiritually and intellectually, all the women I have ever known and is my sole consolation and encouragement. She could be a writer of great

things if she cared to be. She and the boy are my great comforts. My poetry used to be everything to me, but now I have these and poetry is a secondary thing. This, perhaps, is as it should be.

There is a book [*Woman and Her Relations to Humanity*—Boston —1892] given through my mother, which communications were taken down by a friend of ours, a Mr. Edward Shippen, now dead, whose words would probably help and console you in your sorrow and trial. The book was published about twelve years ago in Boston and I am going to try to get a copy of it and send it to you. These communications, from the lips of spirits, speaking through my mother, will astonish you. My mother never had more than two years schooling in her life and the message delivered through her from these departed ones, cannot but fill you with wonder and convince you of an hereafter where your loved ones are awaiting you as well as watching over you and your interests. If I can obtain a copy of this book I will mail it to you Be hopeful and believe in the happiness that the future has in store for you. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1907, April 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I think you will understand that book, given through my mother, more perfectly as you digest it more thoroughly. She, as well as myself, put very little faith in the so-called materialization of dis-embodied spirits, about which her book says little or nothing. I myself have seen no materialized spirits, and did I see such, would question their truth. But spiritualism is a truth. That the dead live and return to us is without question in my mind. I have spoken with too many beautiful departed souls to doubt that they return to comfort and to console, to instruct and to aid us.

The illustrations [for the five volumes] are noble and adequate and have entered into the spirit of my verse as intimately as I could expect or desire. Eric Pape is one of the most enthusiastic admirers a poet could wish for, and has wrought seventeen masterpieces for the works. He has, in his own words, found his inspiration in my lines, and has adequately expressed it on canvas. * * *

We have purchased a beautiful home in St. James Court of this city and shall move into it [from 105 West Burnett Avenue] on or before June the first. As soon as we are settled in it I expect to get back to poetry again. At present I feel no inclination to write anything. I hope, however, the spirit will move me again to take up the pen in the interest of beautiful, serious poetry. If it does not I shall be bitterly disappointed. * * *

1907, May 26.

John Wilson Townsend: * * * Your beautiful life of *Richard Hickman Menefee* is a work of great research and one that you may be justly proud of. For a young man it seems to me that you have done wonders. But you will go on doing greater things, I am sure. You have it in you and it will out. Unquestionably, to my thinking, you have done not only the memory of Menefee a magnificent service, but also the State of Kentucky, in writing and publishing this fine biography. * * *

1907, May 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: What you say about Alden's report on the poets, to James Bryce's question as to "Who are your poets," amused me. Mr. Alden is an old friend of mine, but in my opinion, he is totally unable to give an unbiased opinion as to who are our best [living American] poets. Moody and Torrence and Robinson are all right. But what are we to say about Edith M. Thomas and Florence Earle Coates whom he mentions also as worthy of serious and great consideration? * * * Why didn't he point to Joaquin Miller, by far our first poet living now, or to James Whitcomb Riley? Burns never did any better work than has Riley done, and Burns is considered a poet of some considerable standing. [In his article on "Our American Poets," published in *The Louisville Times*, May 31, 1907, and republished in this volume, Mr. Cawein presents Riley and Miller as the foremost living poets in America, both of whom were "overlooked" by the New York editors who attempted to answer Ambassador Bryce's question.]

1907, May 31.

Thomas S. Jones, Jr.: Your Jar of Fragrant Roses [*The Rose-Jar*] came to me in the midst of moving. Still I have snatched odd moments to dip into it and breathe its perfume. I have to thank you for those moments and the pleasure I have received from the perfume of those roses. * * *

1907, June 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your sonnet is good. I find nothing to criticize in it. It strikes me as being a very characteristic sonnet and yet different from those you have heretofore shown to me. I find no fault at all with it.

I was up to Bloomington, Indiana, last Wednesday to see Riley made a Doctor of Laws. He received the honor with dignity, and afterwards, he with Henry Watterson and myself, were the guests of honor at a luncheon at the University of Indiana. Riley bears his honors and degrees with ease. This is the fourth time that he has been made a doctor of something by universities of different localities. He was never better and never more agreeable and cordial. He made me return to Indianapolis with him as his guest and there I had to remain until I had to leave for home. He and Mrs. Holstein made it most pleasant for me in their beautiful home. That night we, Riley and I, sat up till nearly one o'clock reading Riley's new book [*Morning*]. That is Riley read to me and I listened with all my ears. He has some of his best work in this book; a poem in imitation of me which is just inimitable ["Pomona," one of Some Imitations]. You would think it actually mine. The book is on the press and will be out about September, I understand.

He sent Preston two little books, *The Tailor of Gloucester* and a little book of "John Gilpin" and "Jovial Hunters." In each of them he wrote something to Preston. In the one of *The Tailor of Gloucester* this is what he wrote, which I consider very neat indeed:

To—Master Preston Hamilton Cawein
From his long-invisible Playmate
James Whitcomb Riley.

There is love of more devices
And Romance that more entices
Higher minds and higher prices;—
But, for "Giggle-boy" or "Cry-sis"
(With some sniffles interstices)
Here's a little tale suffices—
Sweet as oranges in slices
Slabbed in slues o' cream and ices
Tanged with tingling, spangling spices.
Ho! there's no tale half so nice as
This Old Tailor and his Mice is.

I always look forward to the arrival of your letters. Your friend, as ever, Madison Cawein.

1907, JUNE 24.

James Whitcomb Riley: The two little books came promptly to hand, and not only made the little heart of Preston H. C. [Preston Hamilton Cawein] leap with joy but throbbed glee into our, though older, not less responsive hearts. *The Tailor of Gloucester*, with its

preliminary rhyme by J. W. R., is inimitable, and I have read the story three times to Preston and the rhyme something like twenty times three times. He is delighted with the *Three Jovial Hunters* also, and never tires of having it read over and over and over to him. Mr. Riley is a very real, VISIBLE playmate of his now; nothing invisible about J. W. R. He is here with him, and us, incidentally, and we enjoy his company vigorously and boisterously. * * *

1907, JUNE 29.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Our new home, No. Eighteen St. James Court, is a lovely one and most beautifully situated within a half a block of Central Park. In fact the Park is right in front of our porch; a fountain flows and patters and drips right before our door. It is a beautiful spot, surrounded by trees and shrubs and flowers. I wish you were here to enjoy it all with me. * * * We are almost across the street from the Rices and just around the corner from the Cottells. * * * I hope I shall here be able to get back to my work again. In fact I will have to as I am miserable without it. I do not know what form it will take, but I know I will have to do something. * * *

A few days ago I received a telegram from my friend Eric Pape, as follows: "Great monument at Stage Fort Park, Gloucester, Massachusetts [to celebrate] founding, in 1623, of Massachusetts Bay Colony. Committee ask you to write and read poem. Dedication about August fifteenth. Senator Lodge, orator, also Ambassador Bryce. You and Mrs. Cawein our guests. I am designer of monument. Answer collect." I wired him to write me more particulars. * * * In the meantime I am reading my history of Massachusetts. I can't say I like the job, or will do it justice if I undertake it. * * *

1907, JULY 18.

Eric Pape: * * * I have read with interest nearly all that you sent me regarding the Massachusetts Bay Colony. My lines of writing the poem ["An Ode in Commemoration of the Founding of the Massachussetts Bay Colony in the Year 1623"] had been laid out long before your pamphlets arrived. I read John Fiske's *Beginnings of New England* and one or two other histories on the subject. I shall generalize in the treatment of the subject. I think that is the better way to treat it and the only way to get any poetry into it—which I expect to do. I have the Ode almost finished. Mrs. Cawein pronounces it the best poem I have ever written. I esteem her judgment highly, as she is usually a very severe critic. * * *

1907, JULY 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I knew that the books [*The Poems of Madison Cawein*, in five volumes] would please you. Yes, they are the handsomest set of verse I have seen for a long time. * * * I have worked hard for all that I have and it was only my determination that made me win through. The books are selling—slowly, but steadily. Nearly every day we get an order for a set. * * * Your letter to me is so full of kind words, too full, in fact. * * *

1907, AUGUST 2.

James Whitcomb Riley: I sent you yesterday a set of the complete poems which, I hope, reached you all right. The books, in the opinion of every one who has seen them, are the handsomest ever published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, with the exception of your own. I hope that you will find some old favorites to enjoy in them, also some new poems, that, eventually, will prove favorites with you.

I start East, to Gloucester, Cape Ann, on the tenth, to be away the rest of the month. Gertrude and the boy, little Preston Hamilton, go with me. We are to be the guests of Eric Pape, the artist, for several weeks. The Ode for the dedication of the monument, to be erected at Gloucester, is written and passed upon by certain friends who are supposed to be critics. Their verdict was favorable, and so I go untremblingly in spite of Ambassador Bryce's presence.

Gertrude sends her regards to both yourself and Mrs. Holstein, to whom, pray, please remember me. Your friend always, Madison Cawein.

1907, AUGUST 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I found much pleasure in the reading of your last letter. I am afraid that the public will never come to regard my poetry as they finally came to regard the poetry of Keats and Tennyson. I may have a few poems in my Collected Poems that may be as good as any these two poets ever wrote, but the great majority of my work falls far below the average work of these. But it is good to have you write me as you do, placing me by the side of the elect. It cheers me up and encourages me to hope for better things in the future. * * * Every one is carried away with the beauty of the pictures [seventeen photogravures after paintings by Eric Pape] and the appearance of the books. These two things have sold more sets than the merit of the poems ever could. They are good recommendations. * * *

1907, August 18, Annisquam, Massachusetts.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * We left Louisville on the ninth and are now the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Pape. * * * On the fifteenth I read my Ode at the dedication of the monument. [The tablet and the bas-relief around it were designed by Mr. Pape.] It was a great event. Ere this you have doubtless received the Gloucester and Boston papers I sent to you. You will observe that some of the persons expected [one was President Roosevelt] were not present.

I have been out viewing the landscape; it is wild and rugged and beautiful. Mr. Pape has a steam launch and we are out in it a great deal. We are enjoying ourselves very much. * * * Preston never looked finer than he does now. He has a little playmate, Moritz Pape [son of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Pape], a little boy about his own age. * * *

1907, August 25, Annisquam, Massachusetts.

Theodore Roosevelt: My dear President Roosevelt: I write to thank you for your good letter of last week. It gave me great pleasure to learn that I had quoted from two of your favorite poems in autographing the volumes. [*The Poems of Madison Cawein.*]

Yes, I am of German parentage My father came to America in the early forties from a little town in Bavaria, the Rhine Palatinate. The family, however, originally came from France, descended from a Huguenot, a certain Jean de Herancour, who left Paris on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. My mother's parents came to America in the thirties from Swabia; so you see, she is entirely of German extraction. She is still living in Louisville, Kentucky, where she was born, as also were all her children.

Mr. Pape came of German parents, as do I, and is very proud of the fact. I never would have bothered you with all this rigmarole had you not asked me in your letter about my parents. Mrs. Cawein asks to be remembered to you, and, with kind regards, to Mrs. Roosevelt. Most sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1907, August 29, Annisquam, Massachusetts.

James Whitcomb Riley: * * * Here is something that will interest you I think. Mr. John Hays Hammond, the man who opened up South Africa for Cecil Rhodes, one of Rhodes' most intimate friends, a splendid man, in spite of his millions, resides near this place ["The Highlands"] between Gloucester and Annisquam. His estate is the most magnificent on the North Coast. He gave a

dinner last night in my honor. The ambassador of Russia, Baron Rosen, and his daughter, a beautiful young girl, were present, as well as the Harrimans, Mrs. Harriman and two daughters, wife and children of the great Mr. Harriman. This all as preliminary. Mr. Hammond asked me to come with him into his study. I had questioned him about Rudyard Kipling with whom he is most intimate, and whom he had visited often and seen often at Cecil Rhodes' home in South Africa. On the walls of the study hung many photographs, autographed, all of celebrities of the world, literary and political, among them two long poems written to Mr. Hammond by Rudyard Kipling; one of some fifteen four line stanzas that I enjoyed greatly. It is in Kipling's best political style, and I wished you were there to read it with me. It has never been published. Mr. Hammond pleased me greatly by asking me for a hand-written copy of my Ode to be framed and hung by the side of Kipling's two poems. * * *

1907, September 12.

Eric Pape: Back we are again and all is serene. I want to thank you and Mrs. Pape very much for the beautiful summer we have had. I don't know when I ever passed a more delightful time and met more delightful people. It all seems like a dream somehow, now that we are away from it in far-off Kentucky. I often get to wondering whether the realities we call real are things that do actually exist. They become so vague, undefined, when we are away from them. I think often of the Old Day House—the one you intend making a studio of—with all its interesting contents. * * *

1907, September 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The trip East did all of us a great deal of good. We are glad to get back to our own home, however, in spite of the great kindness and consideration of our friends, the Papes. * * * Mr. Pape is a fine fellow, and his wife is a beautiful as well as a noble woman. * * * Somehow I feel as if my life-work were ended and that there is no use trying to do anything more. I can not do anything as good as that which I have already done, and there is no use in going on and doing inferior work. * * *

1907, September 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * You must not delay your visit to us too long. I am summoned to serve on the jury in the United States Court, beginning October fifteenth. I hope you will be able to

get here the week before or earlier. * * * I promise you a quiet time. We can talk and take long walks in the woods and read and discuss poetry, and see a few friends like the Cottells and Anna Blanche and Josephine McGill. * * *

1907, October 2.

John Wilson Townsend: * * * Your *Kentuckians in History and Literature* came to me a few days ago. Thank you for your kindness and for the able article on my work which it contains. I read with much interest the article on Thomas H. Chivers. It is curious and interesting. The book, as a whole, is a very creditable one—one, I am sure, you will hear more about. I hope that it will bring you fame as well as money. * * *

1907, October 20.

James Whitcomb Riley: *Morning*, dewy and fresh as a wild rose, broke upon my reverie the other day and I have been breathing its fragrance and its wild-bird music ever since. This is surely, as I told you before when in Indianapolis, one of your best volumes and ranks back with *The Old Fishing Hole*, *Afterwhiles* and *Green Fields and Running Brooks*. You have recovered your early strength and are forging ahead again. One or two of the poems are among your very highest achievement—to name one of them merely is sufficient, "We Must Get Home," full of some of the very finest nature work, imagery, metaphor, what you will, that any poem written in the past half century by a master of poetry can show.

You are to be doubly congratulated upon the fineness of this book, with its great title and its great poetry. Titles usually mean something and are hard things—I mean good titles—to discover. You have discovered one of the very best in the whole field of titles. This book is surely beautiful as the title of it signifies, and I hope that the critics will recognize its quality and give it as rousing a reception as we barefooted kids used to give the morning of the summer day when we were to have a great picnic out at Wet Woods.

With greetings from Mrs. Cawein and a twittering cheer from Master Preston Hamilton Cawein, believe me, your friend always, Madison Cawein.

1907, October 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Stocks still continue to go down, and I am still pegging away on the Federal Jury [9:30 A. M. to 5 P.M.]. It keeps me confined. I hope that this will be the last week of it, as I want to enjoy the wonderful October weather. * * *

I continue with my child poems, and Preston teases me to death to read them to him. He is very much interested; more so than I thought a child his age [three and one half years] could ever be. But these poems do suit him and I have to read and re-read them to him, and each new one I write over and over again. * * *

1907, October 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I wish you were here now to see the glory of the woods. Autumn never was more gorgeous. I am out in the woods every day. I should like to take my tent and camp there on the hills. * * * I now have about thirty-eight poems for my child book [*The Giant and the Star*]. * * * They are all more or less comical; so they strike me, others may consider them sad stuff. * * *

1907, November 14.

Hubert Gibson Shearin: In answer to your letters and questions received yesterday, I will endeavor to give brief but satisfactory answers. [Many of the facts given in this letter appear in Mr. Shearin's article on Madison Cawein in *Library of Southern Literature*, published in 1908.]

I was born in Louisville, Kentucky, March 23, 1865. My father came from Germany, the Rhine Palatinate, in the early part of the last century. His name was William Cawein. He was descended from a family of Huguenots, whose head was a nobleman named Jean de Herancour, who at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 left Paris, France, with his entire family and settled with them at Mühlhofen in the Palatinate of the Rhine.

On my mother's side my grandfather was a German officer of cavalry under Napoleon Bonaparte. But after Napoleon's defeat and downfall, he left Germany with his wife and came to this country where he settled first in Ohio, then in Indiana and finally in Kentucky—at Louisville, where my mother was born and afterwards met and married my father. My mother's maiden name was Christiana Stelsley. They had five children.

As a child, at the age of seven, I think, I was taken to the country by my parents together with my three brothers and a sister. There we lived in Oldham County, Kentucky, for over a year. Afterwards we moved to Indiana—back of New Albany among the hills—on what is called the Knobs. Here I formed my great love for nature. For nearly three years we lived there in a small farmhouse on the top of a hill, surrounded by wooded hills and orchards, meadows and

cornlands. If ever a boy and his brothers and sister were happy they were happy there. We walked to New Albany to school, a district school, every school-day from fall to spring, a distance of two and a half miles, but we enjoyed it. At least I know I did. I used to love to walk along by myself making up wonderful stories of pirate treasures and remarkable adventures which I continued from day to day in my imagination. It was a serial usually that I could continue unendingly—and which was dependent upon no publisher for future installments.

After we returned to Louisville, I attended the public schools in that city, and in 1881, aged sixteen, entered the Male High School. Before I entered and during the time I remained in the High School I was very fond of reading what would be called now, I suppose, dime novels—tales of wild adventure in the West and elsewhere as set down in magazines and weekly papers for boys. At the age of sixteen, however, tales of chivalry began to attract my attention and all that I could get hold of I devoured with avidity. It was at this time that I secured and read Spenser's "Fairie Queene," and liked it so well that I wrote to the publishers to find out if the other books of that great poem were securable. I received a courteous reply to the contrary telling me that Spenser died before the completion of the poem. So, liking the poem very much and being disappointed in its continuation, I sat down and read it through a second time and liked it better than I had the first time. As I advanced at High School my tastes in literature underwent a change under the directorship of one of my most noteworthy teachers, Prof. Reuben Post Halleck, now principal of the Boys' High School. I got to reading Sir Walter Scott and committed entire cantos of "Marmion" and "The Lady of the Lake" to memory and recited them from the rostrum in the chapel of the school—as it was there usually that we declaimed. I had commenced writing verse by this time, the age of seventeen or eighteen, and was encouraged to recite the same by Prof. Halleck of English and Elocution. I cannot tell how many pieces I wrote in verse to declaim. Not one remains. They were usually of a high and mighty manner, bombastic to a degree, and not to mention that they were imitative of the masters—Shelley, Scott, Goldsmith and Tennyson, mainly. I used to burn the midnight oil in my teens writing long narrative poems modeled on first one and then the other; I remember one in the manner of "Christabel" and another in the manner of "The Ancient Mariner" that I wrote sitting up until two or three o'clock in the morning to finish, one or two thousand lines in length. Byron I never cared for greatly; but I did for Keats—particularly the poems of "St. Agnes Eve" and "Hyperion." But my poor accomplishments as compared with their great ones filled me with despair very frequently. And when I secured and read, or tried to read, Shelley, I gave up in absolute despair and determined

to write no more. Where was the use, I argued, seeing that a mere boy like Shelley had produced a masterpiece at the age of eighteen—his "Queen Mab." But, nevertheless, I went on writing and despairing at intervals; sending my verses away to the magazines and receiving them back again as promptly as I sent them, until the day of my graduation. I graduated in 1886, aged twenty-one, and wrote and read the class poem on that occasion.

I should have liked to have gone to some college, Harvard or Yale, after graduating; and seriously thought of entering the Navy, going to Annapolis at one time, or to West Point. We were poor and I had to do something. My brother, the oldest, John D. Cawein, had secured a position for himself in a pool-room "The Newmarket," in Louisville, on Third Avenue, and he took me in with him as his assistant. Here I toiled for nearly eight years, in a most uncongenial, unsympathetic atmosphere of tobacco smoke, auctioneering and betting. With my first savings I published my first book, *Blooms of the Berry*, which Mr. Howells reviewed so favorably in *Harper's Magazine.* As I had to remain until nine and often after eleven o'clock at night in the pool-room, I used to read to while the time away, between the occasional cashing of winning tickets presented at the cashier's window. Here I read at odd times, keeping up my favorite studies, Ovid and Heine, and even translated into rhyme some of the latter. Here I also read many of the English classics.

I was always, at school, keenly interested in science and kept it up to some extent after I had graduated; but with my confinement in the pool-room you can imagine how much time I now had to devote to its study. Outdoor life, walking in the woods and studying animals and insects, bees and birds, and particularly trees and weeds and flowers, held me at a very early age. Now the time had come when I could indulge myself very little; only on Sundays which I usually devoted to poetry and to roaming among the woods and hills of the adjacent country—along the Ohio River on the Kentucky side, or near the Falls of the Ohio on the Indiana side, or among the Knobs that had become endeared to me in my boyhood—all beautiful and picturesque.

Mr. William Dean Howells was the first to extend to me a word of encouragement, which has been sustained and emphasized by him with the publication of each new book by me. He was my first literary friend. James Whitcomb Riley came into my life early in my career and we then formed a staunch personal, as well as literary friendship which has not waned with the passage of years. My friendship with Mr. Howells has extended over some twenty years; with Riley over some sixteen or seventeen. Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Arthur Symons, and Mr. Andrew Lang in England, are all good friends of mine. It is true I have never met any of them, but we correspond at intervals and Mr. Gosse proposed the English edition of my poems for which

he made the selection and also wrote the introduction. Mr. Lang has reviewed my work at length and most favorably; in fact, as Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton said to me, I have the distinction of being the only living American poet that Mr. Andrew Lang ever praised.

I write in the mornings usually; immediately on rising, before breakfast, I go to my desk. After breakfast I write as long as I am so inclined. Of course I do not write poetry every day. Sometimes months pass, and sometimes a year, when I write little or nothing. Often I write in the woods, the country, composing in my mind as I walk along, and after finishing the stanza, stopping to record it in my note book. Most of my last book, now in *MS.*, was written in this manner. The entire volume of some 150 *MS.* pages was composed in less than two months. Up to the time I began the writing of it I had not written a new line of verse for a year. When I am engaged upon a poem—like the Ode written for the Gloucester, Massachusetts occasion—I sleep, eat, walk, sit and stand with it. I cannot get away from it until it is finished to my satisfaction, or the satisfaction of the one within me whose judgment passes upon it.

I suppose I have read everything, or at everything, ever written. Science has held me and led me; Philosophy, the companion of Poetry, always; medieval poetry, mythology and legendary love have influenced me in my earlier work. German poetry from the "Niebelungen Lied" down, as well as folklore traditions of Germany and the Old World in general have always captivated me. The Provençal tales of the troubadours, jongleurs, Courts of Love, have been my delight and impressed themselves upon my poetry at intervals. And this is true of the myth and romance of all countries, which swayed me at the time of their reading, and may they always sway and hold me! Very truly yours, Madison Cawein.

1908, JANUARY 3.

Eric Pape: * * * Get the January number of *The North American Review*, and read what Mr. Howells has to say of "our" books [*The Poems of Madison Cawein*]. This notice of my poems should persuade some publisher to undertake, right away, the publication of the Ode. If it doesn't, I shall lose all faith in myself, the Ode and the occasion that called it forth, as well as the efficacy of any review, good or bad, to help a struggling poet along. * * *

1908, JANUARY 12.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Your "The Legend of the Red Rose" is a very lovely legend, very gracefully told and with many charming lines. I like it as well as your "A Miracle of St. Cuthbert."

It is different, but it is beautiful, too. I would like to see you turn your poetic ability to other lines—American ones, if possible. I never cared much for religious poetry—or rather themes of religion done into poetry. To tell you the truth I never was religious and never will be according to the requirements and directions of the creeds of the churches of the Christian world. I am a pagan, always and always. I can see these old legends in the light of faulty tales. They strike me as being an inferior sort of fairy story; but I prefer the real fairy tale—the out-and-outer. Tennyson did so, too, and made a beautiful poem out of one of them. You could, too. * * *

1908, JANUARY 12.

Ivan Swift: Your *Fagots of Cedar* have made and left a sweet, wild aroma in my house, and I want to thank you for the pleasure they have given me. "Songs of the Cedar-Maker" would be hard to beat. It is a song right out of the heart of the country of which you sing so wildly and so well. * * *

1908, MARCH 15.

Mrs. Alicia K. Van Buren: How we do wish we were with you and your little coterie of writers in Florida—John Burroughs, among them! Why, you are certainly to be envied. Of all men writing at the present time about nature, he is assuredly the greatest. His companionship in the woods and fields is tantamount to a liberal education, and I am sure you are profiting by his presence. And dear Mr. Trowbridge, the good gray poet, and his wife! * * * Let me congratulate you once more on your having a poem taken by *Harper's*. You are surely forging ahead, and will continue to succeed, as you deserve to. Your work, as far as I am able to judge, is improving steadily. I am sincerely glad and Gertrude joins me in extending congratulations. * * *

1908, APRIL 16, NEW YORK.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We came to New York last Thursday and have been having a delightful time with Doctor Henry Van Dyke and others. * * * At "Avalon," Doctor Van Dyke's home at Princeton, we were royally received and entertained. Doctor Van Dyke has one of the most magnificent homes in that city. His library and study are superb. He, his wife, son and daughters are all lovely people, and did everything they could to make us enjoy ourselves.

He, his wife and daughter, Brook Van Dyke, came to New York with us and we have passed a very pleasant time with them. At the banquet of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, given last night at the University Club, I met many famous men, poets, artists, musicians and sculptors—among them Percy Mackaye, the author of the poetic drama *Sappho and Phaon*, and *Joan of Arc*, Ridgely Torrence, Edwin Markham and Harrison S. Morris, and a host of others. I was called upon for a speech by the president, William M. Sloane, author of the *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* and, all unprepared as I was, got up and said a few things. F. Hopkinson Smith made some witty remarks and referred to my speech with some praise. Harrison S. Morris was in to see us this morning and brought me his last volume of poems, *Lyrics and Landscapes*, just published by the Century Company. It is a pretty book and contains some very beautiful poetry. You will like it, I know. He is a very fine poet indeed, and, as a man, a true souled fellow whom I like greatly. * * *

1908, April 23.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We returned from New York on Monday, and were glad to get back. We had a beautiful time but a cloud was cast over the entire affair by our being robbed at the Hotel. Gertrude was robbed of all her rings and a diamond and an opal stick-pin. [None was recovered.]

I met F. Dempster Sherman at the Century Club and had a long talk with him about poets and poetry. He, you know, was one of Mr. Aldrich's chief henchmen—a great personal friend of Aldrich and one worthy of being such. He told me a great deal about Mr. Aldrich's attitude towards my poetry, which was very flattering indeed. It was an interesting conversation. Ridgely Torrence and Edward Arlington Robinson were the only other poets I saw after the banquet. Both are interesting young men. * * * I expect Walter Malone in Louisville the end of the month on his way to Memphis. Did you see Gertrude's sonnet in *The Smart Set* last February? * * * ["Beloved, If Tonight," *Smart Set*, February, 1908.]

1908, April 26.

Eric Pape: Your letter just received and thank you over and over again for the portrait [large portrait of Mrs. Cawein by Eric Pape] and the photos which we have so greatly admired. They are quite a gift and, my dear boy, you know that they are appreciated; how much I cannot say in words. The portrait looks stunning in our parlor and grows upon us every time we pass the door. It is a

noble work of art. Doctor Van Dyke [who was here in March] liked the photographs greatly and retained one of the portraits, and I also gave him one of the others to have framed for his study. He selected the one of the ghostly figures at the door of the old house. He was overjoyed to have it. He said it was a beautiful and impressive picture, of which he should like to see the original. His home is so magnificent, so full of great works of art, including an oil painting of himself by Alexander, life-size, and one of his wife and little girl also by Alexander, and countless other things, that I took it as quite an honor that he wished to have these pictures also framed and hung up in his lovely home in Princeton. It is a house of the Colonial order dating back to 1750—before the Revolution, and he has built and added to it. Great urns, set up on a balustrade, like these in your illustration of "Marianna," are placed here and there around the entrance and side. * * * He is a fine fellow and a great club man. He placed me at three clubs while in New York: The Century, The Players and The University. You would like him, I am sure, if you ever met him. His daughters are lovely girls, five in number, of which the youngest, Katrina, is only three years old. The eldest, Brook Van Dyke, is to be married in June, and to the son of William Hamilton Gibson, whose work you may remember. He was an old favorite of mine. Doctor Van Dyke has sent us a number of beautiful books, his own and others, all bound handsomely at the Adams' Bindery in New York.

We saw Gilder [in New York] and sent him the photograph [of Mr. Pape's portrait of Mrs. Cawein] which, I hope, he will think enough of to place in *The Century*. He was most kind and brought my books down to the parlor for me to autograph. He thinks the illustrations splendid and the edition superb. He is very noncommittal when it comes to things going into *The Century*. He did not say he would or he would not publish the portrait. But we left it, nevertheless. Let us hope for the best.

I met Percy Mackaye, the poet, at the banquet [of the National Institute of Arts and Letters], and had a pleasant chat with him. He is a fine, a striking fellow, and a true poet. He stands far ahead of the rest of the poetic dramatists in this country, I think. There were a number of artists at the banquet, and sculptors also, whose names I had never heard before, but they are famous in New York. I hoped to see your name on the list and it will be, as it deserves to be some day, I am certain. You should be a member; you are as worthy as, if not worthier than, some of those who are already members. I note your illustrations to the Terry Memoirs in *McClure's*. They are fine. Those also of the Well's volume in *Pearson's* are excellent also. When the books are out I shall get them at once I spoke to Sloan, President of the Institute, about you, and he said nice things about your illustrations to his *Napoleon*. * * *

The Ode is receiving some notices and I shall send you what I have. The Boston papers have had a few brief notices—nothing to speak of—*Globe* and *Advertiser*—not worth mentioning. But the Louisville papers have had long and fine notices in them. You can keep those I send to you. You see the Ode was so commented upon at the time of its delivery that the newspapers will pay little or no attention to it now.

As to going to Spain, I should be more than pleased, charmed, to make the trip with you this summer, but fear that one thing or another will prevent. Finances mainly, as I owe something like $9,000; $2,500 of which was borrowed to pay for the publication of my books. [*The Poems of Madison Cawein.*] The rest to pay for the new home we bought last year. The interest on this sum is due next month, and also the principal on the $2,500 note. Were it not for this I would say, sure, I'll go. It would be a magnificent experience.

I feel ashamed of myself for writing you what those cards cost me. I did not intend that you send me the money for them. You have done so much for me, and given me so many lovely things that I feel that I ought to do something for you in return, and this, Lord knows, was very little. Perhaps, some day I can do something really worth while for you in return for all that you have done for me and mine. * * *

1908, JUNE 15.

Miss Anna Blanche McGill [then in New York]: It was good of you to write me so beautifully of the Ode, and the sonnets that are printed with it. Also to let me know that I had one more admirer in the world of *men*. Recently I re-read Lowell's Commemoration Ode, and the re-reading put me out of patience with my poor little endeavor, of which I think far less now than I did last summer. It is foolish for any poet to attempt to do anything in this line since Lowell put up the standard.

Louisville is getting rather dull now. Settling down to the long summer lethargy. We see the Cottells as usual and they see us sometimes. Last night we bade Dr. Wm. H. Ramsey [of the First Unitarian Church] goodbye. He leaves today for England and thence to Ireland. I can imagine the good time he will have revisiting his boyhood haunts and intimates. He wanted me to go with him, but I have other things to keep me occupied.

I suppose you are doing some writing in New York. Could not conceive of your idling ever. I hear that you have had a story taken by some magazine East. Good for you. Keep it up. * * * Regards to Josephine. * * *

1908, August 16.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Gertrude and I have been invited by Captain Burgess of the U. S. A. to take a trip this week on his private boat on Barren River and Green River, Kentucky, and we are going. They say it is a beautiful trip as it goes through Edmonson County, the County of Mammoth Cave and other great caves, many of which are unexplored. The trip will occupy not quite a week. We promise ourselves a good time. * * * [They returned on the 22nd. Mr. Cawein made his first trip to Mammoth Cave and Colossal Cave in 1898.]

1908, September 6, Annisquam, Massachusetts.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your two letters posted on the high seas, from Madeira and the Canary Islands were forwarded to me here, at my friends the Papes, where Preston, Gertrude and myself are spending the month of September. We are having magnificent weather and a beautiful time. We are out in Mr. Pape's yacht, the Viva, a great deal. Preston enjoys it as much as any of us. * * * We were on the water all day yesterday. We went to Newburyport and then up the Merrimac River, famous in song and story, to Amesbury, the birthplace of Whittier. We passed under the chain-bridge, over the Merrimac, made famous by a poem of Whittier's. * * * All around this region the country is hallowed by poetical associations. I have written a number of sonnets—in the woods, on the rocks, by the sea, and shall write more. * * *

I wish you were here with us. Such weather! Such air! Such beauty of sea and sky and land! It is strange that both of us should be having ocean experiences this summer and so different, in such different places. I wish you were here, and then I wish I were where you are. The world is great and full of wonders, and the works of man are not the least of them. * * * A night or so ago we beheld the heavens in magnificent display. The Aurora Borealis flashed and circled and came and went in the northern heavens. And in the midst of it all a great flaming meteor ploughed its way completely across the heavens, adding to the wonder. A wonderful phenomenon, beautiful and awe-inspiring. * * *

1908, September 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter mailed from Montevideo, S. A., came yesterday. * * * We returned from Annisquam last Wednesday. While there I wrote a great deal among the woods and along the shore. Eric Pape was especially pleased with some thirteen

sonnets, all of them full of pictures of that wonderful coast, as well as the interior. Pape took me to Dogtown, an abandoned village, not far from Annisquam and Gloucester. * * * The place is the weirdest I have ever seen. I wrote a ballad while walking or sitting there—a witch-ballad, one of the wildest things I have ever done. I call it "Gammer Gaffer."

1908, November 18.

John L. Patterson: Thank you for your metrical translation of Bion's "Lament For Adonis." How lucky you are to be able to read it in the original Greek. It is a beautiful poem, without question, and one well worth reading and re-reading. I thank you again. Very truly yours, Madison Cawein.

1908, December 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Glad to hear that you have returned from Buenos Aires and are back in St. Louis again and at work. * * * Gertrude is contemplating a trip—a Christmas gift of mine to her—to France next month, with a lady friend of hers, Mrs. Austin Ballard. She will go to Paris where there are a number of our friends who will show her a good time; Doctor and Mrs. Van Dyke, for instance. I can not go myself as I haven't enough money for two. I shall go to Europe sometime, I suppose, when I can afford it. I don't care for France; it's England I want to see. * * *

1908, December 28.

Ethel Allen Murphy: Thank you for your book, *The Angel of Thought*, which came to me so appropriately the Eve of Christmas. I have enjoyed it greatly. You have written some notable religious sonnets. Indeed, I hardly know where to look for better ones. One particularly enthralls me, the one entitled "The Loving Christ." Not even Rossetti has done better. That is really your height, the finest thing you have ever done, and a sonnet the masters would be proud to have written. * * *

1909, January 7.

Miss Laura Stedman: In answer to your letter of the 4th, I am sending you three letters, which I received from your grandfather, and which I have cherished now for years.

Madison Cawein

The two earliest letters, written in 1888 and 1889, on my sending to him *Blooms of the Berry*, my first volume of poems, published in 1887, and my second volume *The Triumph of Music*, published in 1888, and my third, *Accolon of Gaul*, published the following year, were letters that contributed a great deal to my encouragement. They filled me with a new enthusiasm, and I went to work with renewed ardor, and have been working on the lines and in the direction which he so kindly indicated in his second letter to me. It is true I have taken that direction unconsciously, as it were, but he foresaw that I would take it, and knew that in the end it would be well for me. American landscape, nature, men and women, hold me now, and have held me for years.

I met Mr. Stedman once or twice, and corresponded with him during a period of some twenty years. The three letters I inclose, however, are the only ones that I think would be of interest to the world. I have no others so intimate, so beautiful. These are letters that I value above all others in my possession, and I hope you will return them at once as soon as copied. Very sincerely, Madison Cawein.

1909, JANUARY 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Gertrude sails on the "Koenig Albert," on the thirtieth of January, for Naples, taking the Mediterranean trip. From there she goes to Rome, Florence, probably Venice, and thence to Paris. On her return she will visit London for a few days. She will be gone until May. Dr. Van Dyke writes from Paris that he wants me to come over. He has included me in a lecture on the Poetry of America, to be delivered at the University of Paris in March. He says he wants me to hear one of my poems he is going to read on that occasion. I am sorry I can not be there to hear him. His lectures have proven—as all he undertakes—a great success. * * *

1909, FEBRUARY 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am glad you liked my Poe sonnet [Poe: 1809—January 19—1909] and also the few remarks made when I read it. I feel indignant with the literati of the East who have attacked Poe so unmercifully. * * * The *people* know his worth, even if those in power do not, and he will be in the Hall of Fame in spite of all their endeavors to the contrary. I have written a poem on Lincoln to be read at an assembly of Louisvillians Friday night in honor of his centenary. I think the poem is a pretty good one. I hope that the people will like it. If not—well! * * *

1909, February 13.

Miss Anna Blanche McGill: There is no question as to the high literary qualities and excellence of your poem "Resurrection." It is beautiful. Some of the lines are pure poetry of a very high order. The spirituality of the whole is unquestionable. I would not say these things if I did not mean them. What if the *Atlantic* did return it! It has returned hundreds of better poems than it ever published. It returned a hundred line poem of mine not so long ago which the *Century* promptly took. * * *

1909, February 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your sonnet on Poe is fine in spots. I read it at the Cottells' last night, and if there was some criticism of it, it made a favorable impression. There are lines of very definite beauty in it. The third and fourth lines are fine indeed. I did not care much for your apostrophe to the critic. It is not severe, caustic enough. I did not like the line referring to the sea's voice "quite ringing true." That could be strengthened, I think. Also "Then wherefore seek his fair renown to harm by base disparagement," does not strike me as clinching. You should give the detractors of Poe a solar-plexus jab, or a jaw-knockout blow, in the final winding up, that is, if you can. If you can't, let it rest as it is. The sonnet is a good one, and in a good cause, anyway.

Yes, Mr. Ferris Greenslet did not see fit to include any of my Aldrich letters in his book. He never even wrote to me regarding them. I feel that he has it in for me for some reason. What it is I don't know, and moreover don't care. About two months ago I sent one long letter to the *New York Times* in which Mr. Aldrich wrote me in 1902, [October 7] on the outlook of poetry. It was given big headlines and a prominent place, [*New York Times*, December 5, 1908] and parts of it were copied far and wide. [It is reprinted in this volume, Chapter IX: Letters Received by Cawein.]

The granddaughter of Edmund Clarence Stedman wrote me a month ago for letters I had received from her grandfather. I sent her three long ones, and she was most grateful as well as delighted. She said they were among the finest he had ever written. They may appear in Stedman's life. [Stedman's letter to Cawein, May 12, 1889, appears in Laura Stedman's *Life and Letters of Edmund Clarence Stedman, 1910* and is reprinted in Chapter IX of this volume.]

I like my Aurora sonnet better than I do the one on Poe or even the Lincoln. But you see I am a nature poet and nature always appeals to me, even in poetry, more than men do. * * *

1909, April 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I found very few typographical errors in the proof of your *A Miracle of St. Cuthbert and Sonnets* which I read very carefully and turned over to John P. Morton & Company. * * * The poems impressed me more on reading them in the proof than they did when I read them in the manuscript. You have several sonnets there that are of a very high order of excellence. The two narrative poems that open the book have a quaintness, a Spenserian archaicness about them, that makes them delightful reading to me. * * *

1909, April 29.

R. E. Lee Gibson: You give me entirely too much credit. What I have done has not amounted to anything. The work is your own entirely. A word here or there; a passage; a suggestion, that was all, and whether your work benefited by it is questionable. I have simply been the conscientious critic, that is all! The work is yours—and it is excellent work, I will maintain. You speak of your desire to write *one* great sonnet. Who knows? Perhaps posterity will find in this small collection of yours not *one* sonnet, but *three* that it will consider great. Dr. Cottell raves about two of your sonnets and I know that the members of the Filson Club were most enthusiastic about *one*, "The Rose." The other one Cottell declares as great is your ["On the] Beach at San Pedro." I think that is the title. There is one that is my favorite; it is "Colonial." There you have three sonnets that perhaps will appeal to posterity more than any one of mine. Who knows? Leave the sifting to time. You will do your work, and if you are to do any better than that which you have done, then you will do it. You can not force poetry. It comes, if it is to come, and the best things we do are done unexpectedly. So I have always found.

As to the criticism you fear so much and the newspaper notoriety in the way of articles, such as you mention, it is true all such are to be deplored. But we can not help it. The newspapers must and will have their fling at all art—poetry especially. I had my share of it. For four or five years I was written up as the Pool-Room poet, simply because I had to earn a living, and fate had placed me in the cashier's department of a gambling house. People looked askance at me and my verse and would not buy my books here in Louisville because I was working in a gambling house. Even now, though twenty years have elapsed since then, there are echoes of what I did—was compelled to do to earn a livelihood.

I ignored all such allusions and have lived them down. Happily you, too, will do the same, if you have not already done so—now that your connection with the St. Louis Asylum is a thing of several years past. No; do not be afraid of what the newspapers may say about you. All newspaper notice, either favorable or unfavorable, is most ephemeral and not worth a serious moment's thought, and by no means worth worrying over. Printed today, forgotten next week. So I have found it, and so it will always be. Gertrude sails on Saturday and I shall be very happy when she is home again. Your friend ever, Madison Cawein.

[A facsimile of this letter appears on pages 284 to 287.]

1909, May 13.

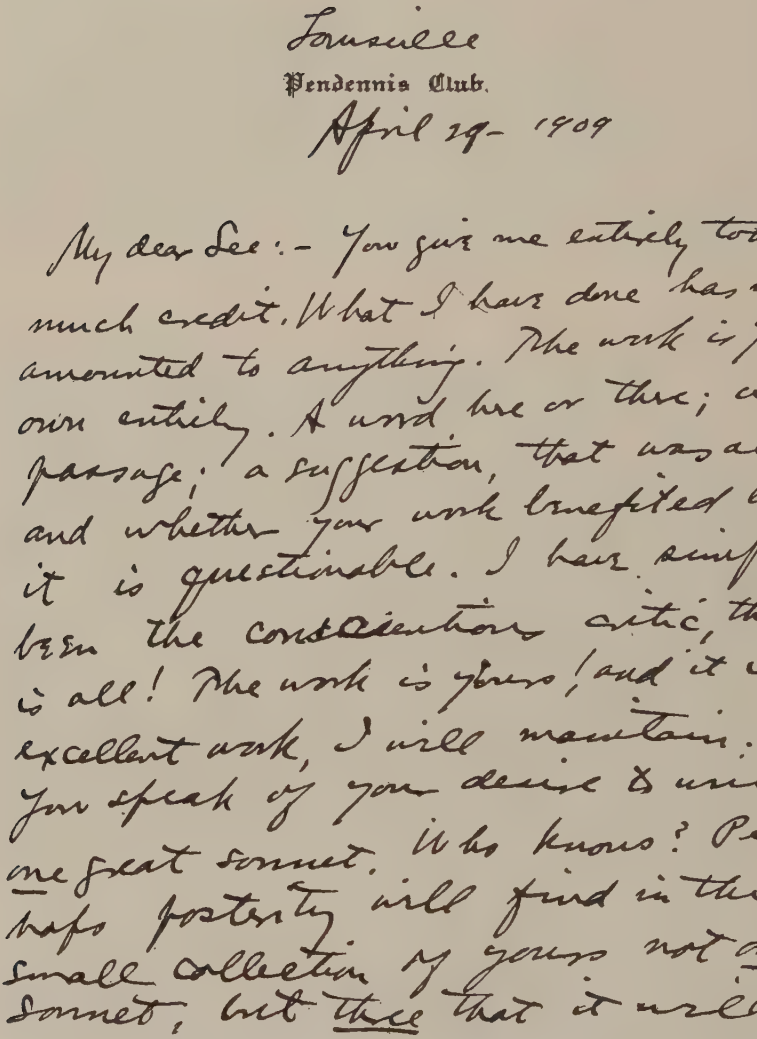
R. E. Lee Gibson: Thank you again for your good words about my poetry. Gertrude returned the evening of the day I received your letter. She is looking radiant. She had a magnificent time through Italy, France and England. She liked England best of all. She visited Stratford and saw a play in the Shakespeare Theatre there. She is full of anecdotes and incidents; we never tire of hearing her talk. She saw a great deal of the Van Dykes. Dr. Van Dyke came over to London, and for five days showed her and Mrs. Austin Ballard about. She saw Grant Richards, the publisher, a number of times, and was at Edmund Gosse's twice. Gosse said he considered me the only poet in America, and since the death of Swinburne probably the only great English poet writing now! He said this in all seriousness to Gertrude.

Mr. Richards, who does not like Gosse, said several uncomplimentary things about Gosse's poetry, but wound up by saying: "But he can pick 'em. If he ever holds one up to his critical eye and passes upon him, you can count upon his being correct." He also said he never saw Gosse go out of his way to call attention to a poet as he did in my case. * * *

1909, May 17.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke: Well, Gertrude is back again, and has been regaling us with all the wonders of her new experiences and the marvelous glories of Italy, France and England. She is in excellent spirits (but when is she not?) and in buoyant health. She never looked better or happier. I thank you and Mrs. Van Dyke. It was most lovely of all of you, you especially, to take so much trouble and time, for you are busy, I know, in many ways—my dear

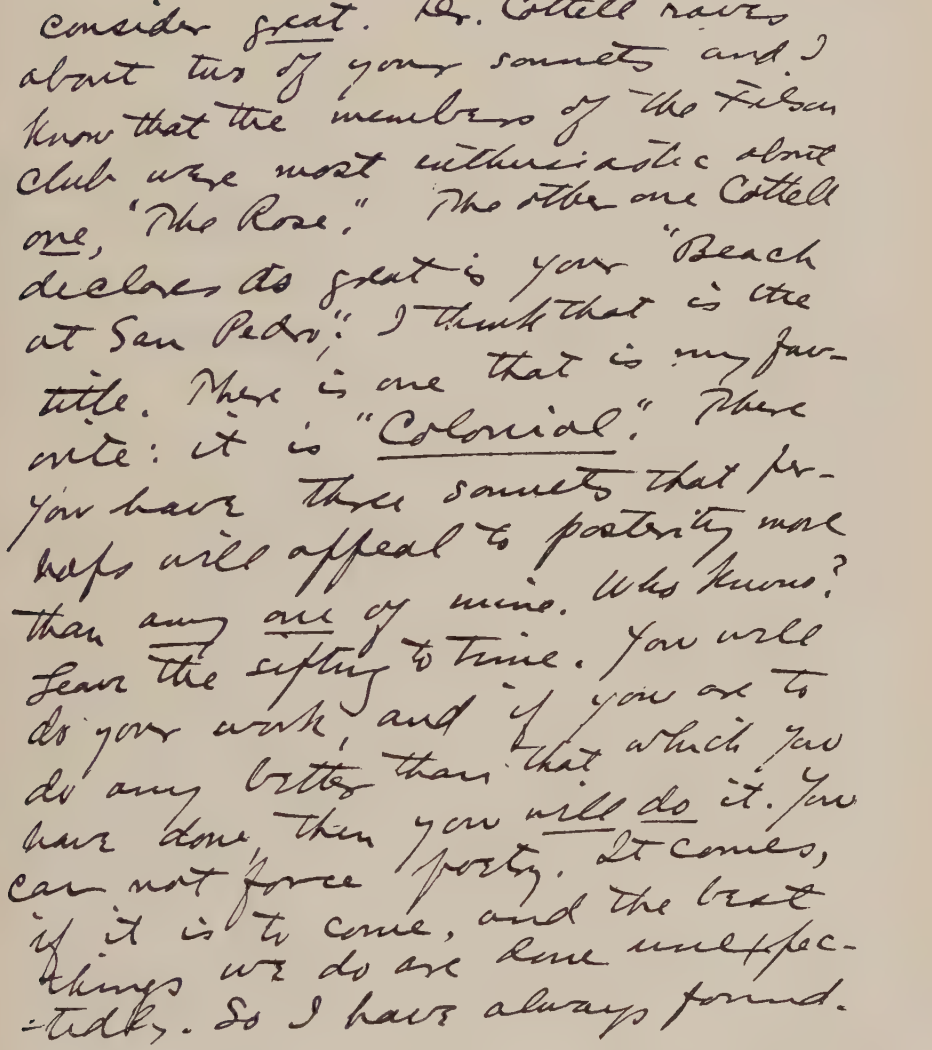
[Concluded on page 288.]



Louisville
Pendennis Club.
April 29- 1909

My dear Lee:- You give me entirely too much credit. What I have done has not amounted to anything. The work is your own entirely. A word here or there; a passage; a suggestion, that was all, and whether your work benefited by it is questionable. I have simply been the conscientious critic, that is all! The work is yours, and it is excellent work, I will maintain. You speak of your desire to write one great sonnet. Who knows? Perhaps posterity will find in this small collection of yours not one sonnet, but three that it will

Facsimile of the first page of a four-page letter from Madison Cawein, April 29, 1909, to his friend, Robert E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis.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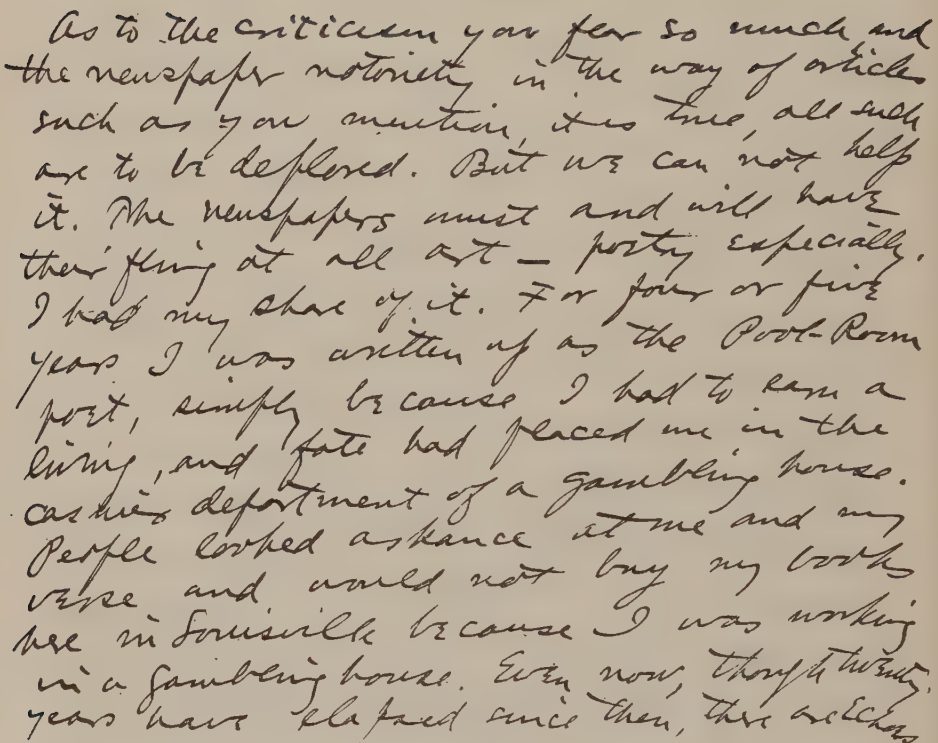
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Facsimile of the third page of a four-page letter from Madison Cawein, April 29, 1909, to his friend, Robert E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis.

of what I did – was compelled to
do to earn a livelihood.
I ignored all such allusions
and have buried them down. Hap-
-pily you too will do the same
– if you have not already done
so, now that your connection
with the St Louis Asylum is
a thing of several years past.
No: do not be afraid of what
the newspapers may say about you.
All newspaper notice, either favor-
-able or unfavorable, is most ephem-
-eral and not worth a serious
moments thought, and by no means
worth worrying over. Printed to day
forgotten next week. So I have
found it and so it will always
be. Gertrude sails on Saturday and
I shall be very happy when she is
home again. Your friend ever, Madison Cawein

Facsimile of the fourth page of a four-page letter from Madison Cawein, April 29, 1909, to his friend, Robert E. Lee Gibson, of St. Louis.

Henry Van Dyke, to show Mrs. Cawein and Mrs. Ballard the loveliness of the one city in the world. She is home again, thank heaven! and full, brimming over with enthusiasm for all she saw, and all you showed her. It did her a world of good, and I am glad I gave her the trip, although I missed her tremendously, and toward the end of April could hardly await her return. She cannot talk enough of you and your kindness, of Mrs. Van Dyke and your daughters, of everything, in fact. Indeed, you and yours pervade the whole theme of rapturous experience like a wonderful chord, a dominant note, of which the ear never tires, in a magnificent strain of music.

I want to thank you for the beautiful little watch which has made Preston very proud already. What it will do to him when he is really able to understand the value of such a gift from such a distinguished man, I am unable to prophesy.

The volumes of verses from England are giving me more or less entertainment. It is greatly worth knowing, at the present time, that the younger set of poets in England are not doing any better work, if as good, as is being done by the younger generation of poets in this country. There is more freshness, more spontaneity, more youth really in the poetry of our poets than there is in the poetry of the poets writing in England at the present time. * * *

1909, May 19.

Eric Pape: * * * I wish that you and the Lady Alice and Moritz [Mrs. Eric Pape and their son] were here now. It is lovely. The Court looks beautiful and Gertrude is home again. * * * Preston was in the seventh heaven of happiness at her return. She brought him some magnificent soldiers from Italy and France. I wish Moritz could see them. They are superb and they could have a great time fighting battles with them. * * *

Well, young man, so you are head over ears in business again with the redoubtable city of Gloucester. I hope that that city appreciates your efforts to make its pageants and dedications successes. Some of its citizens, I am sure, appreciate your good works in their interest. Your letter and cards woke longings in my breast for the dear old places among the Cape Ann hills that we frequented and dreamed and poetized in last summer. It is a beautiful place and full of inspiration for both artist and poet. My *New Poems* will be out the last of May, in London, and one of the first copies received goes to my good friend and compatriot in art, Eric Pape; you will find in this volume, which, I fancy, is one of the best I have ever written, all the poems written at your dear little home last summer and several others written after arriving home. My mother-in-law, Mrs.

McKelvey, better known to you and Lady Alice as "Miss Annie," is much interested in your beautiful Cape Ann and the Papes incidentally, and Moritz particularly. * * *

1909, JUNE 9.

Eric Pape: I take it much unkindly that thou hast not seen fit to come to Old Kentucky this month. Why and wherefore? We are greatly disappointed to learn from the Lady Alice that you could not, or would not, come with her and Moritz. It is too bad. Why not cut out work for a while and come to God's Country and loaf with me and Gertrude? Forget toil. It is good for one's soul to do it every now and awhile. The Coburn Players will be here the end of June at the Country Club, and we could go and see the Canterburies as there presented. Now try to come to see us. Preston has a tent in the backyard where he and Moritz could have a fine time with his toys. He also has some chickens that lay fresh eggs every day. Moritz I am sure would enjoy it. * * *

1909, JUNE 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: You overwhelm me. Yes, I do believe I have some of my best poetry in *New Poems*. I do not care what the critics say about it, or whether an American publisher will think well enough of the volume to import it. The book, I am sure, will stand. I feel better satisfied with this volume than with any other I ever published. I have arrived at an age and a stage in poetry when I feel that I know better than any critic when I have written a good poem. And this little book certainly contains some of my best work. * * *

1909, JUNE 23.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I see you still think well of the book [*New Poems*]. There are several poems in it which you have not mentioned that I think the best in the volume. They are "Tramps" and "The Shadow." I am sure of these and that nothing like them has ever been done before. In a certain way they are what one might call dramatic. They satisfy me. * * * It makes no difference to me what any one says about it, good or bad, I am certain that the poetry in this little book is worth while. I have devoted twenty-five years now to the writing and reading of verse and I think I have passed my apprenticeship and am able to judge. * * *

1909, JULY 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I go to the woods every now and then and select some deep retreat, remote and treey, with a rock or a stump, by some pool or running water, and there I dream and invite the muse. All my recent work has been done in the open, among the trees. I find I can write better in this way and do better work. If it were not for the gnats and chiggers I would get along better, but they do annoy one fearfully at times. * * *

1909, JULY 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We are going to Cape Ann. * * * We are to be the guests of Eric Pape at Annisquam from August third till I know not when. I have been appointed one of the judges to bestow prizes in the Gloucester Pageant where Percy Mackaye's "The Canterbury Pilgrims" is to be performed. President Taft is to be present on that occasion—and a number of artists, poets, players, sculptors and dramatists. The list of persons represents some of our greatest names. Percy Mackaye is to be the guest of the Papes, so is Charles Rann Kennedy, the author of "The Servant in the House," and his wife, who plays a part in that superb play, which I hope you have seen. * * *

1909, AUGUST 29, ANNISQUAM, MASSACHUSETTS.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * We met the President yesterday at John Hays Hammond's. His face broadened into a great smile when he learned that Gertrude and I were from Louisville. He knew a number of judges and lawyers whom I knew. President Taft is certainly a man of men. Both of us liked him immensely. The affair at the Hammond's, held on the lawn, was most delightful. * * *

1909, SEPTEMBER 5.

Eric Pape: Home again at last after the greatest month passed with you that my life records. It was certainly a month of wonder and filled to overflowing with events and meetings. It all seems like a dream now, and I wonder if it is true that we were with you, that we met the interesting people that we did meet, among them the first person of the land, President Taft, and the great English actress and her renowned husband, Charles Rann Kennedy. But we must

have met them as we have the souvenirs which they sent to us and gave to us personally—I mean the Kennedys. Thinking it all over, old fellow, all those trips around the Cape and to Boston were simply indescribably lovely. You, and the lovely Lady Alice, are simply incomparable. No two other hosts, I am certain, are there like you in these broad lands. You made us happy, Gertrude and me, and we recognize it and appreciate it. You have set the standard of entertainment so high that I fear that, if you ever do come to Kentucky, we can never touch you, much less reach you, in any degree. In the first place we haven't the wealth here, nor the artistic and literary people, nor the President, who make for all that is great in a great nation. But we have other things—different in a way—that count for something in life. Some day, I hope not far off, you will give us an opportunity of showing a little attention in a Kentucky way, to you and the noble Alice and little Moritz. Preston we found well and happy. He was greatly interested in all we had to tell him of Annisquam and Moritz and Mr. and Mrs. Pape. He grows apace and will soon be a young man. He already has some of the airs of the young men who make up our State's gallantry.

The trip home was long and, toward the end, hot and tiresome. The ship was a novelty and a delight all the way from Boston to Norfolk. The captain, Captain Chase, next to whom we sat at table, singled us out for special attention and was with us talking and laughing most of the trip to Norfolk. He is a fine wholesome fellow.

* * *

1909, October 21.

Walter Malone: I have read with much care your pamphlet of selections from your epic "Hernando De Soto" and have been greatly entertained. There are many fine passages throughout the selections. The epic is full of pictures—painted as you only know how to paint such pictures—in magnificent colors that glow. Your song of the Indian maiden in the part entitled "The Dominions of Coosa," while most beautiful in rhyme and rhythm and in thought, does not impress me, I fear, as such a song as Indian maidens would sing. It is too literary.

On the other hand, the metaphorical allusion to the dawn at the beginning of the part entitled "The Spoils of Cuzco" is worthy of Milton. Throughout the selections from the epic you have figures of speech, allusions, metaphors, whatever you may call them, that lend a glory to the description and surpass anything you have ever done heretofore, and anything in blank verse that has been done for many years in this country by even our best poets. The only thing that I am afraid of is that your epic tends toward being too long for

the public. As for myself, and other poets, too, I suppose, that could never be. I read it as I read an interesting novel, or history. It held me from start to finish and the glamour has not yet departed. You are doing a great work; but will it be appreciated? I am the last one who should ask such a question, but at this time when poetry has fallen on evil days and tongues, a man has to have a wonderful amount of belief in the future of poetry, in order to devote himself to an epic of such length and magnitude. But all the more honor to you, even if it does not succeed. You will have done a good work. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1909, October 21.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Meredith Nicholson and his wife, from Indianapolis, are here with us. We read at the Woman's Club last night. * * * I read some of my Child Rhymes from *The Giant and the Star*. The "Little Boy Sleepy" took the audience completely; the "Epilogue" pleased them also, but not as much as the sleepy little boy. I hope the public will purchase this book of rhymes as I am sadly in need not only of a little success in this line but also of money to discharge certain obligations entailed in publishing this book. That's what overhangs me—the gloom of rejection. If you have not the money to publish your own poetry, you might as well give up the production of the book. No publisher wants poetry now, no matter how good or bad it may be. It does not sell, and the near outlook for a revival is as far off as the North Pole, which I doubt has ever been discovered, although they say it has. * * *

1909, November 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Yes, I met the old poet, William D. Gallagher, years ago, here in Louisville where he dwelt for some time, and died unnoticed and uncommented upon. He was an old, shy, diffident man, as I remember him. I had not read much of his work, but since then, some twenty years or less ago, I have come to admire some of his works greatly. "Miama Woods," for instance, is a good though old-fashioned poem. Others might be mentioned also. He was quite a stir in his day. * * *

1909, December 26.

Eric Pape: * * * I am glad to learn from your letters that you are at work on some paintings. I am sure that both the Bull Fight and the Golden Rose will be masterpieces. That is the sort of news I like to hear. That is the sort of things you ought to be doing

instead of attempting any more pageants which eat up your time and energy and coin, and bring you in nothing but disappointment and a headache, while others get the credit for what they did not do. Stick to your brush and canvas. They cannot take the credit or the fame away from you for what you do with these. These things that you do will last, and outlast all the pomps and pageants of the world. The insubstantial is not a portion of such work as that which you put in oil upon enduring canvases; but it is a part of all pageantry, as you yourself are well aware. I should like to see these pictures and may see them some day.

I have finished my book of Plays: three one act fanciful things called "The Shadow Garden," "The House of Fear" and "The Witch" and one three act tragedy called "Cabestaing," a play of the time of the troubadours and, I think, stageable. They will be brought out in the spring by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, and I am dedicating the volume [*The Shadow Garden and Other Plays*] to my best of friends, Eric Pape, Artist. * * *

1910, JANUARY 15.

Eric Pape: * * * I just had a letter from the Columbia University at New York to come on and deliver a lecture on poetry to the graduates. I was selected to deliver this lecture in place of Richard Watson Gilder. A high compliment, and one that goes to show that the men at the head of Columbia University think well of my work, as they would not have asked me otherwise. Of course they will pay me, but I fear I can not accept as I have never lectured before. [He did not accept.] Brander Matthews recommended me, as also did Professor Trent and several others. John La Farge, Dr. Henry Van Dyke are to lecture, as are also a number of others. Within the past few months I have been made a member of the Authors' Club of London, England, of which George Meredith was president, and whose president now is, or will be, the poet laureate, Alfred Austin. * * *

1910, FEBRUARY 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We have had a very busy week of it. Dr. Van Dyke has been with us and is still here, but leaves today. He is a charming man and a whole-hearted one, too. I wish you could meet him. He came to visit us after a tour of several days lecturing at various clubs and universities. * * * John Fox, Jr., and his wife are here also, and we had a little affair at our home that stirred up the natives. Fritzi Scheff, as you know, is Fox's wife; she is a

charmer as well as a singer. Last night we had a great time at the theatre, and after that an elaborate dinner at the Rathskeller of the Seelbach Hotel whereat much champagne was drunken. I like these little diversions; they make one forget one's troubles. * * *

I, too, hope that things will do better; I'll try to keep up my spirits with that hope. But things look rather dark. If one did not have to worry about money and living, what one could do in the way of art! I hate to think about it, for it seems that as long as we are mortals we shall be compelled to wear clothes and to eat and keep up appearances. Civilization has its exactions. * * *

1910, March 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Last week I received a check from *Scribner's Magazine* for a poem of forty lines. The check was for $50.00, the largest amount I ever received for a single poem of this length. * * * "The Shadow Garden" is the finest thing I have done yet. Nothing that I have ever done can compare with it, so all affirm. * * *

1910, March 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Spring, I think, is arrived at last. We have had an ideal week of lovely weather. Preston had a birthday yesterday, and is very proud of his six years. Mine comes next week when I shall be forty-five years old. Think of it! Time to begin to patch up my body for the grave, eh? So time slips by. I am busy with the proofs of my book of plays [*The Shadow Garden and Other Plays*]. * * *

1910, May 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have just met George Ade here at the Pendennis Club. He is quite a sport. He is here for the races—the Derby is to be run today. Quite a prosperous-looking gentleman with an air of seriousness about him, and his appearance, face and manner, would suggest anything but that of a literary character. He seems to be well provided with the material things of earth. * * *

1910, May 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have just read in *The New York Times* a most complimentary review of a book of poetical plays by one whose name is unknown to me—Ernest Lacy. It is called *Plays and Sonnets and the Bard of Mary Redcliffe*, that is Chatterton. The

extracts given are superb poetry. I myself remember Julia Marlow playing this play of Chatterton some twelve or fifteen years ago. It seems that the poet since that time has elaborated and lengthened, as well as strengthened, the play. I thought you might care to know of this book that has won much fame in England for the author and is likely to do the same for him in his native land now—America. I imagine the book is worth having. * * *

1910, JUNE 14.

Harrison S. Morris: You certainly have discharged your obligation beautifully. Your letter regarding *The Shadow Garden* has come, been read and has conquered. Thank you for your good opinion. Every one is writing me beautifully about the book. I had a letter from Dr. Van Dyke yesterday on the order of yours, and the other day one from England, from Arthur Christopher Benson who spoke of the book as being "pure poetry."

You are certainly correct about that "amputated foot," but it was not my fault that the line underwent a surgical operation, but the printer's. I have proofs still with me that show that line went to press with "bells" on its toes, but appeared, when it came forth completely attired without its "bells." It dropped its foot somewhere in the press. But it should read thus and will so read in a new edition.

"And burst her brails and with her jingling bells;" So you see that makes it walk correctly. There is a period missing also at the end of the line under this one—the line ending with the word "white." There are several typographical errors in the book. All of them crept in after the book went to press. I cannot understand it. * * *

1910, JUNE 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I thought I had written to you about my young lady friend, Miss Marion Forster Gilmore, of Louisville. I have been encouraging her ever since she was about fifteen years old. She is now about twenty-one years old. The tragedy "Virginia" that opens her book—*Virginia, a Tragedy, and Other Poems*—was submitted to me two or three years ago, and, as it was the work of a girl of eighteen, I thought it a very remarkable performance. I made the selections for this her first book from a mass of *MMS.* submitted to me by her father, Thomas M. Gilmore. He is crazy about his daughter and has done everything to encourage her and bring her talent to the front. She is an ethereal looking creature, but has a vigorous mind and one that will make its way in poetry, no doubt, as she advances in years and in the devotion which she now shows to her art. * * *

1910, JUNE 26.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * All is at a standstill with me just now. A lyric occasionally is all I do. Some have been taken by the magazines—a long one last week entitled "Shadows and the Moon," by *The Forum*; and this morning an acceptation from *The Outlook* of a lyric I wrote in the woods a week ago, entitled "The Wind in the Leaves." I write all my poetry in the woods now. * * * [See *The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*, pages 51, 115, 21; and "The Wood Stream."]

1910, AUGUST 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * It is very dull here—nothing doing except the stock market, which will not advance any or little when it isn't going down. * * *

1910, SEPTEMBER 14.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I received this month—since the first—checks amounting to $85.00, for poems, from the magazines. Last month my receipts from poetry, published books and magazine poems, amounted to over $200.00 That's not bad, is it? But Lordy! I needed it. Stocks have all gone to hell. * * *

1910, OCTOBER 15.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Preston is learning rapidly, and as long as he and Gertrude keep well I have nothing to complain of. As for myself, I am never sick [?] but keep on the hustle, and between the stock market and poetry I have little time for pleasure, except that which comes from good books. * * * [October 25]: * * * I have been sick. I was bragging in my letter to you that I was never ill. Lo and behold, a day or two afterwards I was taken down and suffered with chills and fever. * * *

1910, DECEMBER 20, PHILADELPHIA.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We are here visiting my dear old mother and my sister and her husband [Mrs. J. Henry Doerr and Mrs. and Mr. John F. Behney.] * * * My sister looks far from well. She is worn down by my mother's condition. Mother is in a very bad way. Poor soul! poor soul! She gets so homesick for her people. She wept and wept when she saw me, just like a little child. I could weep when I think of what she was once and what she is now. What a change! The source of all these things, I think, is homesickness—the loss of old friends gone on before, and of her last husband who simply idolized her.

1911, JANUARY 6, NEW YORK.

Dr. Henry A. Cottell: Poets to right of me, poets to left of me, poets all round me volley and thunder. Sunday night we are to meet every poet of eminence in New York City, at our charming friend's, Miss Rittenhouse's. On Saturday evening I am to read from my poems and plays before the Forest Hill Club of Newark, New Jersey. They offer me a check for $25.00 for the evening's entertainment. It's worth going after, don't you think so? I am to read also privately, after a dinner Monday night, at Mrs. Jessie L. Barbour's [Jessie Lemont] apartment. None but the elite admitted.

We went to see "The Girl of the Golden West" last night. Saw all the society of New York in the grand tier boxes and orchestra. Seats cost me $10.00. We go again to a matinee taking Miss Margaret S. Anderson of the Louisville *Evening Post* with us. We are to see Humperdinck's faery tale of Hänsel and Gretel, followed by The Arabian Nights with the marvelous Russian Dancers in it over whom all New York has gone wild. We saw the two dancers last night and heard Caruso vociferate. He is a singer, but Amato, the baritone, pleases me more. The latter is a wonder. We have seen "The Blue Bird" too, and found it marvelous. "Chantecler" is the next on the list, maybe. Money is running low. Forty dollars in one week for shows is going some, eh?—for a poet. * * * Now take care of the Pendennis Club while I am away. * * *

1911, JANUARY 12, New York

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * We have remained here to see the first performance of Rostand's "Chantecler," by Maude Adams, next Monday, and Percy Mackaye's play, "The Scarecrow," that is given a first appearance, on Tuesday. Percy Mackaye is having quite a number of his literary friends at the first performance: James Lane Allen, Edwin Arlington Robinson, ourselves, etc., etc. We have met all the poets of consequence here. At Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse's we met Mr. and Mrs. Markham, Witter Bynner, Percy Mackaye, Anna Hempstead Branch—who surpasses, as poet, all other women in America or England—Gertrude Hall and a number of others. Miss Anna Hempstead Branch's book of new poems is just out and you must read it. It is called *A Rose of the Wind*. It is a book that no lover of poetry can afford to miss.

Yesterday I met, at Harper Brothers, Miss Edith M. Thomas and had a long chat with her. She is a grey-haired but bright-eyed and kind-faced woman, a spinster approaching sixty years, I suppose. I took lunch with Ridgely Torrence, one of our best poets I think; also called on Edwin Arlington Robinson whose new book, *The Town Down the River*, is full of great poetry.

We are to meet at luncheon today Mr. and Mrs. Charles Coburn, of the Coburn Players, and Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse and Ridgely Torrence. Tomorrow we go to the Coburns' to a reading and reception. Monday we are to go to the Charles Rann Kennedys'. She is the actress who is playing at the New Theatre. Her husband wrote "The Servant in the House." They are lovely people. Mrs. Kennedy is rehearsing for early production of "The Piper," by another friend of ours, Mrs. Josephine Preston Peabody. Her play took the Shakespeare prize last year at Stratford, over 500 or 600 submitted plays. * * * And so it goes and not half told yet. We remain here until the eighteenth. * * *

1911, JANUARY 20.

Harvey Peake: * * * I have no bookplate. There is no reason why I shouldn't have one, but I simply neglected to provide myself with such. All well-regulated poets, as well as other types of writers, should have a bookplate. The only thing I am fortunate enough to possess is a crest; but I fear I have mislaid it, and it would not help me out of my predicament, even if I should lay my hands on it at this moment, for you want a bookplate. * * *

1911, JANUARY 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am head over heels in work, doing the Introduction for The Macmillan Company [their *The Book of Love*, compiled by Jessie Reid] and never had a more difficult job. I despair now and then of making it worthy of the works—selected poems and sketches—it is to introduce. I am to be in great company—the company of Shakespeare and of Tennyson and Browning, you bear in mind—and I have to do justice to their ghosts.

I have made a number of selections for the new book [*Poems by Madison Cawein*,—selected by the author]. I don't think I shall put any of the poems in *Kentucky Poems* in this new volume of mine. Would it be right? *Kentucky Poems* is a book of selections, as you know, and why make selections from a volume of selections? It does not seem to me to be the right thing to do. * * *

Gertrude returned home from New York last Saturday. She took my *Shadow Garden and Other Plays* to the manager of the New Theatre. She saw him personally and he said he is going to give the plays his attention. He told her that the New Theatre was looking for just such things by American poets and playwrights. [None of the plays has, as yet, been presented on the stage]. * * *

1911, February 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Yes, poor Riley! I almost wept when I read of his condition. * * * I see by today's paper that he had another stroke of paralysis. I want to run up to Indianapolis to see him. [About a week later he visited Mr. Riley for a few days. Mr. Riley died July 22, 1916.] * * *

1911, March 8.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I finished my volume of selections this morning and am ready to deliver the goods to Macmillan's. * * * The poems, I think, are representative and among my very best—[*Poems by Madison Cawein*]. I sent you yesterday an advance copy of my little poem, *So Many Ways*. It is all handsomely colored, and the booklet, I think, is very cheap—retails for fifty cents a copy. Makes a nice little Easter gift. P. F. Volland & Company, Chicago, write me that nearly a thousand copies have been sold before publication. The six artistic calendar panels that the same firm is to publish this spring will be out soon. They are beautiful and will sell for three dollars a set. * * *

1911, March 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * My mother died yesterday afternoon at two o'clock. She passed away peacefully, sister telegraphs from Philadelphia. * * * The poor soul had no sense of feeling or consciousness of anything after being stricken down about two weeks ago. My sister is bringing my mother's body to Louisville. * * * She will be buried in beautiful Cave Hill. You will remember, you and I wandered through the place many years ago. * * * I owe all that I have to my mother. She was as noble a woman as ever lived and one who, with only two years of schooling, could hold her own among scholars, with ease. Her gift of discourse and expression was born in her—not acquired. I have often sat enthralled under the influence and the spell of her beautiful phrases. She could speak eloquently on spiritual things and matters—more eloquently and more interestingly than any preacher I ever heard. In fact, her eloquence disqualified me forever from listening to the stale saws and sermons of the ministry. But alas, she is gone! That bright eloquence is hushed and the light that held and possessed the souls of her children is extinguished. * * *

1911, May 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am glad you are pleased with my selection. I should have liked to include many more poems, like "Carmen" and "Had we lived in the days," etc., etc., but the publishers wanted the book cut down, and they omitted some of the larger poems. As to the change made in the last stanza of "The Garden of Dreams," I found it necessary from the fact that the last two lines of the poem were not true to myself—song did not pass me by, for a fact; and albeit she has not behaved to me as well as she might I have no quarrel with her. The other, or the first version, is probably better than the last, but I thought in a volume like this it was better to speak of beauty than of song. You may have observed that I have returned to some of the original readings in certain of the poems that you like—notably in "Unrequited" that stands as it stood in *Moods and Memories*. A number of others, too, I have placed back as they were first presented. I wish I could have included the whole of "The Idyll of the Standing Stone" as well as all of "Some Summer Days," and "Wild Thorn and Lily"—some of the best poems I ever wrote. But it was impossible; so I selected what I thought the most representative part from each of them. I should have liked to include some blank verse pieces, but they are all too long. The publishers wanted short poems mainly and I made my selections from such. * * *

1911, May 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * It is terribly hot, but I think healthy. I am busy with my new volume, adding to it every day, and have decided to change its name from "A Web of Dreams" to "The Common Earth." The title poem is long and one of my very best creations. [Title of the book was later changed to *The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*.] * * *

1911, June 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Things are going slowly; nothing doing, except that I am writing again. More than ever. But all seems to be in abeyance—waiting for something—I know not what, but just a-waiting. * * *

1911, July 4.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Well, here is the wretched Fourth! Hot as hell and getting hotter upon us suffering Americans again! How I do hate the Fourth; not because I am unpatriotic, but because of the

heat and the noise and sickness and accidents that follow in its train. All so senseless, and wrong, it seems. Preston is sick. He has had a fever for the past four days and I am worried about it. Poor little fellow! He has looked forward to the Fourth for so long and now he can't enjoy it at all, I fear.

I am disgusted with life. Always something to mar our pleasure in the days that we should enjoy. One thing after the other—if it isn't sickness, it's lack of money, or anxiety about what's going to happen. I tell you I get awfully tired of life—of writing and working, and nothing coming from it all. I'll be glad when the wretched business of living is all over, and the restless soul is at last at rest.

I am glad you liked my change of your lines. It struck me that it improved the stanza at any rate. The poem is a good one, I think, and so thinks the worthy Dr. Cottell.

It was 104 degrees hot here yesterday. Such weather is enough to kill everybody off. The sooner the better, perhaps. There is really no incentive to any one's living. Every year brings greater discouragement, or less, or something of ill. Very little good in life. Excuse pessimism. Love from all. Your old friend, Madison.

1911, JULY 11.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Anxiety knocks all poetry out of me. I can do nothing but wait until Preston is convalescent. I read a little, prose mainly, but occasionally a book of poems comes along that takes hold of me. Such a book is George Stirling's *House of Orchids*, just published in San Francisco. It stamps him as one of the greatest poets. His sonnets are wonderful. And his style throughout the poems is lofty and often reaches the sublime. I did not like his first book, or *The Wine of the Wizardy*, but in this last book he has done great things. * * *

1911, AUGUST 1.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Good poetry is a scarce article these days; I see very little in the magazines and less in book form. Poetry is not encouraged enough in this country. Now in England it is quite different. I see that the government there has recently pensioned W. B. Yeats, and a poor poet named Davies who was a tramp at one time and still very poor. This puts the two poets in a position to devote their lives to poetry and dispense with anxiety for the future which simply eats out all the poetical quality in a man. I am anxious every day as to what is to become of me and mine in the near future. * * *

1911, August 27.

Eric Pape: Your telegram [urging us to visit you] gave us all a great surprise. It came just after our return from Charlevoix and Mackinac, and Chicago where we saw the aviation meet—wonderful indeed. I have secured a drawing room on the Pennsylvania Railroad for Wednesday, and if all goes well we'll be with you Saturday next. * * *

1911, September 17, Manchester, Massachusetts.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Glad to hear from you. We are the guests of Mr. Pape and having a good time. Go to Boston every now and then. But I love to walk in the woods here. There is a brown stream and a ruined mill I love to sit by. Have written a number of sonnets, as good if not better than the Annisquam ones. We return to New York next Sunday and home on the twenty-ninth. * * *

1911, October 21.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke: My book [*Poems*] speaks so beautifully to me through you [a letter, by Henry Van Dyke, to the Book of Chosen Poems of my friend, Madison Cawein, October 16, 1911] that I am scarcely able to recognize it as my child. It seems to have taken on a glory that was not there before you addressed it in lovely language. And through the praise which you have bestowed upon it, it has been made dearer, as a child might, through the worded admiration of a friend, to the heart of its father.

I, too, would like to write to your book [*The Poems of Henry Van Dyke*], as you have written to mine. What a beautiful forest of wonderful things it is!—peopled here and there with edifices of imagination, and vocal with the music of immortal birds; "The Whip-poorwill" and "The Ruby-Crowned Kinglet," and most holy of all, "The Hermit-Thrush." Bees and birds and blossoms make it redolent and murmurous and lure one to wander on and on into another world not of the earth, but of the soul. It is a forest of fancy where one may lose oneself in the present or the long ago, following a lyric cry now, or the epic thunder of the waters of life. Gertrude has written you of how much she has enjoyed it. She and I have spoken of it, discussed it, and loved it together. It is a body of poetry, I believe, that will last and grow into the life of our literature, unquestionably. Like your stories, it contains nothing that is not vital and of value. It will establish you high in that place which you have labored for and desired so many years,—the high place of song, which so many long for, my friend, and so few ever attain. Very faithfully your friend, Madison Cawein.

1912, JANUARY 1.

Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse: Mrs. Cawein has finally persuaded me to come on with her to attend your reception and the Poetry Society's banquet on the twenty-third. * * * We are looking forward to meeting you again with our usual delight. Miss Sara Teasdale, from whom I hear occasionally, writes me that she intends coming on to your reception and the dinner. I am anxious to meet the young lady, who, I think, is writing exquisite verse. She will be heard from unquestionably, in the world of poetry, later on, as one of our greatest poets. * * *

1912, JANUARY 21, NEW YORK.

Eric Pape: Gertrude and I are in New York again. * * * On Thursday I leave for Philadelphia to attend the annual dinner given at the University Club by the National Institute of Arts and Letters; and on the twenty-sixth the open meeting of the Academy and National Institute held at Belleview-Stratford, morning and afternoon, when a gold medal is to be presented to the poet who, by the members of the Institute vote, is considered worthiest of that honor. I have no hope of receiving it, but I want to be present on that occasion and see to whom the gold medal is to be presented. * * *

1912, JANUARY 25, PHILADELPHIA.

James Whitcomb Riley (a telegram): Dear old boy, I want to be the first to congratulate you on receiving the gold medal for poetry. Great enthusiasm at Institute dinner over the award. Am proud of you over this national recognition of your genius. Madison Cawein.

1912, JANUARY 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I cannot agree with you regarding the beauty of your friend. Her poetry is far more beautiful than she is, and it is good to see how she is appreciated by the poets and lovers of poetry. But how you could go raving wildly about her looks and her style simply beats me, my boy. Love certainly blinds us. But, as I remarked before, what she lacks in looks she makes up for in intellect.

I left Gertrude in New York where she is devoting her time to music, and ran down to Philadelphia to see my sister whose death is expected any day. * * * I attended the banquet given by the

two societies, The Academy and The National Institute of Arts and Letters, and voted with the others unanimously that the gold medal be bestowed upon James Whitcomb Riley, which it was, with acclamation. It is the crown for his life work—national recognition, as it were, by the greatest thinkers and workers of this country. He should feel proud of that medal, as doubtless he does, and should now be content to die, as perhaps he is.

In New York at the Poetry Society I met all the poets, good and bad, in this country, and one or two from Ireland. I read a poem on that occasion and made a brief speech. But as a whole it is all very unsatisfactory, when you come to look back on it. * * *

1912, March 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I was invited two weeks ago to attend the Howells' Dinner given by George Harvey in New York. I did not have the money to go and so had to decline. I am sorry not to have been present, as Howells I consider the greatest of all our writers, and he has done more to encourage young authors than all the rest of the literati in the East put together. He is not afraid to praise where he thinks praise is due, and there is not an iota of envy in his generous heart for any poet or novelist, living or dead. * * *

1912, March 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The Poetry Society is broadening out. It is becoming a power in the land, and I am glad. We may see quite a universal interest taken in poetry before we die. It is about time I think.

Today is Preston's birthday. He is eight years old and happy as a lark. He will have his little boy friends to lunch today, and toys, ice-cream and cake and candy are the order for the day. Do you know that he is writing verse? He comes from school every day nearly with a new rhyme in his little head, and he taps it out on the typewriter, too. His rhymes are very simple and sweet.

Next Monday night the Louisville Literary Club is to do honor to Madison Cawein. It is the silver anniversary of the publication of my first volume, *Blooms of the Berry*. I have sent the president of the club a poem of yours to me, which will be read on that occasion. I don't think I shall be there, as I know I should be fearfully embarrassed. * * *

1912, March 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: My sister died yesterday at four P. M. [in Philadelphia]. Her husband is bringing the body on for burial here. Friday will be the funeral. She suffered, poor child, but now she is at peace. * * *

1912, March 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter is beautiful and consoling. It is full of fine things, and Jack, Lilian's husband, wants to thank you, as well as do I, for all the consoling things in that letter. * * * Now sister is at peace, sleeping by the side of mother whom she loved so, and missed so since her departure just a year from the day that she herself received the great call.

At my request the Louisville Literary Club's celebration of my birthday and the publication of my first book, twenty-five years ago, will not be postponed but will take place tomorrow night. I do wish things were different so that you, next to Dr. Cottell, my dearest and most devoted friend, could be present. But fate has willed it otherwise. But you, you of the Old Guard, will be there in spirit, I know, and in a way, will be there in fact, as a very beautiful poem of yours, a tribute to me, written some time ago, will be read on that occasion. Some sort of a silver piece in commemoration of the affair is to be presented to me. * * *

1912, March 30.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I could not express to you how overwhelmed I was at the ovation extended me by the eminent men and women of Kentucky at the celebration given by the Louisville Literary Club. And still it goes on. * * * Everybody was delighted and everybody most enthusiastic. The Old Guard was well represented in William Dean Howells, Dr. Cottell and yourself. Oh, my dear friend, how humble it all makes me feel. I felt more like weeping than laughing. It was all so beautiful! And the cup is a perfectly wonderful one, and one that shall go down in our family from generation to generation. Dr. Cottell distinguished himself and covered himself with honor as well as glory. A kinder, a more loving friend, man or poet never had. He is waiting for me now. He sends you his love. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1912, March 31.

James Whitcomb Riley: I have not had time to write you how much your letter to my twenty-fifth anniversary-of-the-Blooms-of-the-Berry-celebration meant to me. It was just like you; and what you had to say went right to my heart.

Young E. Allison was to take a prominent part in the affair, but was compelled to give up at the last hour. He sent a characteristically beautiful letter, which was read by the master of ceremonies. Allison and I are going to descend upon you some time this spring—that is, if old man winter will ever give the fair maid a chance to show the hem of her skirt and her high-heeled shoes. * * *

1912, April 4.

Eric Pape: Your letter to hand regarding the ovation and the crowning of me "Poet Laureate of Kentucky." Yes, it was a great occasion and echoes of it are coming in constantly from New York to California. A note came this morning from dear old Charles Rann Kennedy, congratulating me. I read his play, *The Terrible Meek*, and should love very much to see it played. He is a great old fellow. I love him—but who does not?

My book—*The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*—is in the hands of the printers now. Before June I hope to mail you a copy. It is going to be the best volume I ever put out, and I hope it will sell, for although I have been made the recipient of great honors, finances are not as good with me as you may suppose. Yes, I am still looking for a good job. I would not hesitate to accept one if it were offered to me. * * * Some day, however, my poetry may bring me in enough to live on—to buy bread and meat and to pay taxes—but just at present it does not. Gertrude is absorbed in music. She intends singing in concert, and has an engagement with Damrosch this spring to try her voice out. It may terminate in an engagement. * * *

1912, April 9.

Stark Young: I hope these beautiful April days are inspiring you to work. I am not getting out too often into the woods and, with lead-pencil and note-book, jotting down the thoughts which must come to one when in a receptive mood. We have some lovely country in the neighborhood of Louisville, and I don't know what I should do without it. I do nearly all my work in the woods, lonely lanes and roads, where one can walk and think, holding communion with the ineffable and the unutterable in nature. * * * I envy you your summer trip abroad. How I should love to be in England, not London, during the Summer. It would simply be perfect, I imagine. There is a number of poets over there, two of them especially, whom I should love to meet—Edmund Gosse and Alfred Noyes, with whom I have had some correspondence; also Arthur C. Benson, a fine poet. * * *

1912, May 2.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I do wish I could get something else to do. It's hard though to find anything adequate or that pays one these times. My work is appreciated and bought, but not to an extent that would support me. Far from it. With all the honors and tributes heaped upon me I remain as poor as ever. * * *

1912, May 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I thought you would like the poems [*The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*]. I do think that this [forthcoming] book is one of my best, if not the best. I have put three years work on it, and I think it shows. I don't think I shall ever be able to do anything finer. I am getting old and tired. I would not mind giving up now; if I had sufficient income for the rest of my days I might do some more work, better work. But the outlook is damnable for pecuniary returns, and it seems harder every year to make a dollar. I don't know what I'll do eventually * * *

1912, May 23.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke: I want to thank you for the John Bigelow pamphlet. Your address is noble and beautiful. I enjoyed it all the more since all this year, so far, some impending disaster seems hanging over my head and the heads of those I love. Perhaps this feeling of gloom, which has entered Gertrude's merry soul and clouded it also, is merely the result of several deaths in my immediate family.

But the cloud is lifting. I hear Gertrude at the piano singing a high-hearted lark-like song—the first time I have heard her for two months, and it sounds like better times a-coming. * * *

1912, June 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter just received, and as I am not busy with a thing I thought I'd write to you. I am still feeling badly. A wretched cough that will not away, and pains and aches in my abdomen, from so much coughing I suppose. I have recovered my voice, at last, and am feeling some better, although far from well. Despondency, too, has settled upon me like a pall. When will it lift and all be sunny and bright as once it was? You know, since mother and sister and my cousin Fred passed away [Frederick W. Cawein died February 18, 1912] I sometimes find myself longing for the great change myself. It is wrong, I know, for there are Gertrude and Preston whom I should hate to leave and it is not fair to them to wish to die. But everything in this life seems to me to be arranged so badly, so miserably. So many people have so much more than they need and so many more have so little. It is unjust.

But enough of this. We are leading a quiet, uneventful life. I have finally got things adjusted with the publisher and the *The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries* is going forward. It will not be out

until September though, which is as it should be. Recently I had two new faery poems taken by *The Century;* one last week, also, a long one, over a hundred lines, called "Treasure Trove," by *Harper's Weekly.* It is the kind you like: pirates and pirate gold; mystery and death. It's a thunderous piece—a ballad piece—the best I ever wrote, and they paid me $50.00 for it. Another poem for which I received $15.00 this week was taken by the *Youth's Companion.* * * *

1912, JULY 16.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * We are remaining at home this year and just nursing our worries and troubles. Can't afford to take a trip, that's the whole truth of the matter; and I see no reason why one, with a home like ours, should want to take a trip. One is always more comfortable at home, if one has a nice one like ours is in St. James Court. * * * I write a few poems every now and then and have one or two accepted occasionally. All is quiet and the sun shines hot in the old Kentucky home. * * *

1912, JULY 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am writing an ode on The Republic now, which I intend to be a protest against the attitude of the times, public and political, and a sort of appeal to God and the world of the lowly and the wise, for patience, etc. I think it is going to be a good poem, but don't know yet. * * * Things are monotonous as ever here. Nothing doing. I write and wait, and wait and write. All seems dull and dead. I had two more poems accepted last week by the *North American Review* * * * two poems also taken by the *Bookman.* We are well, but bored to death with waiting for things to come about. Preston plays and has a good time every day. * * *

1912, OCTOBER 10.

Stark Young: I am particularly pleased to learn of your success in having your new volume of poems placed and am looking forward to its appearance. I am sure it is good, and I am impatient to see what you have dedicated to me, with its fascinating title. Do you know *The Poetry Review,* published in London? It is an able monthly magazine devoted entirely to poetry. This month's number is given over to American poets; last month's was to French, and next month's will be to German. There is quite a revival of interest in

poetry in England, judging by the amount of space given to the poets in the magazines. In this country it would be impossible to get such long poems as "The Everlasting Mercy," and "The Window in the By-Street" taken by a magazine and paid for. They do better and more things for poetry in England than they do here.

I get more and more disgusted with the outlook—the publishing and paying outlook for poetry—every year I live. Nevertheless I keep on writing.* * *

1912, October 12.

R. E. Lee Gibson: What you say about Riley's poems is very true. I used to be greatly amused by his humorous poems, when I was twenty years younger, but—ah me! mirth vanishes with the years. The nightingale's song outlasts that of the cuckoo. Not for me any more those humorous rhymes; give me the deep clear undiluted wells of Parnassus. It is the only well to drink of. But I owed something to Riley. In my youthful days he extended a hand of encouragement to me and praised my work, recognizing and appreciating my serious poems. It was twenty-two years ago; think of it—almost a lifetime. Riley knows good verse when he reads it, too. But he is no scholar, no academician, like those pragmatic poets of the East who set themselves up as the Lords of Poetry here. * * * [This letter was written a few days after Cawein returned from Indianapolis, where he had gone to help celebrate Riley's birthday.]

1912, November 10.

Stark Young: I am glad, very glad, that the poems [*The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries*] have appealed to you so strongly. My heart and soul were in the writing of them; and all of them, without an exception, were written in the hills and woods hereabouts, or in New England woods and gardens, or by the sea. It seems that I no longer can work indoors, except to elaborate, revise and correct. If I can not get out into the hills, among the trees, I can do nothing—my brain is blank, the muse is unmovable elsewhere. In the second part of the book—"Character and Episode"—are some dramatic lyrics which I consider a departure from my usual nature studies, and, in a way, some of the best things I have done. Professor Mark Liddell * * * considers "The Common Earth" [the first part of the book] the best thing I have ever written. I am almost of a mind with him. But then a poet is not the one to speak authoritatively of his own work. "Robber Gold," "The House of Pride," "The House of Night" and "Crime" ["Guilt"], I fancy I like better

than some of the poems in the first part of the book. "The Dryads" is my favorite above them all. You must, some time, see the beech forest, wild and primeval, in which I wrote the greater part of that little play. * * *

1912, November 23.

Stark Young: * * * There is a Jewish Rabbi, a fine intellect here, who is to write an article about my work and myself for a Yiddish paper published in New York. It all seems so strange. He comes today to interview me. I know German, but not Yiddish. He wants to read the article to me. I shall let him, of course, but do not expect to understand one tenth of it. * * *

1912, December 16.

John F. Behney: * * * The break in the stock market has simply done for me, and I have lost thousands. I have a hundred and fifty shares of Tippecanoe stock that pays me dividends of 7 per cent per annum, and I want to sell it or borrow on it; but nobody is buying stocks or lending money on them.

Preston got your box of candy on Thanksgiving and he enjoyed it, and we helped him to enjoy it. We are all well. It looks like a wretched Christmas for Gertrude and myself; but Preston is to have a fine one as usual, but no tree and no Aunt Lilie to look to for a box. We are an unlucky and desolate lot. I wish you joy and success, however, for the coming year. * * *

1912, December 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your lovely little Christmas gift delighted all of us. * * * I thank you, too, for your good letter which is so full of sympathy. I have written to several personal friends for suggestions as to what to do, or as to an opening in something, but so far I have only received letters of surprise, astonishment and inability to understand how or why it should be so. Well, it is thus. Now what am I to do and who's going to give me a job? * * *

1912, December 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Your letter, so enthusiastic over Marlowe, pleased me very much. I sent Dr. Cottell a copy also. I don't think many moderns know Marlowe. But he is as much worth

knowing as Shakespeare. His "Faustus" has some of the greatest lines in it that English poetry knows. * * * Christmas is festal here. Preston has three railroad trains. He is as busy as a railroad magnate managing them. Also a castle, soldiers, Indians, books, houses, etc., etc. He is as happy as a lark and makes everybody else so. * * *

1912, December 29.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Well, here we are on the verge of another year, and it finds me perplexed and anxious and poorer than I have ever been. I don't know where to turn or what to do. God may direct me later on and bring something my way eventually. In the meantime I am writing verse with a message of hope and love and friendship, when I don't feel any of these have much existence at the present time; not in my heart, at any rate. Miss Fortune seems to have taken up lodgings in my home and has unstrapped her valise and trunk, and is determined to stay, in spite of all my efforts to bundle her out. * * *

1913, January 10.

Stark Young: * * * "The Seven Kings and the Wind" [dedicated to Madison Cawein]—a great title worthy of Maeterlinck—is the most mystifying of all the seven playlets in your *Addio, Madretta and Other Plays*. It is symbolic, of course. * * * I like "The Star in the Trees" most. All of them, however, are worthy of keen attention, and I shall read them over at once. * * *

1913, February 7.

Stark Young: * * * On Monday last we had a great snow storm and I wish you could have seen our Court [St. James Court] and the neighboring park [Central Park] we walked through last summer. How beautiful! Every twig and tree loaded down with immaculate white. It was a faery landscape, wonderful, mysterious, the sun making it shimmer and shine with a magic unsurpassed by anything I ever saw before. And this lasted three days, as it froze hard on the boughs after the storm was over. * * *

1913, February 27.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * You will find a little poem of mine in *Scribner's Magazine* for March. It is called "The Old

Remain," and I think it will find favor with you. I wrote it right out of my heart. I felt every word and line I wrote in that poem. I was sad, depressed, overwhelmed. * * *

1913, April 15.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke: About the first of May I hope to send you a little book of homespun verse—called *The Republic* after its introductory poem, an ode published in last month's *Forum*,—containing a number of poems, all American. I have taken the liberty of dedicating this book of simple American poems to you for the high standing of excellence that you have maintained through the last quarter of a century both in poetry and prose in American literature.

I suppose you have returned from your trip to California, which, I am sure, you enjoyed. We have not been away from Louisville now for over a year. Things have gone bad for me in a financial way, and I am at my wits' end as to what to do. Gertrude has been ill for a month and more, with the grippe and general depression. Poor girl; she wants to do so much and can do so little. Preston, too, is just recovering from quite a spell of sickness—the chicken-pox. But otherwise he is happy and full of play. * * *

1913, April 16.

Walter Malone: I am in great trouble. Reverses, financial, have come upon me that make it necessary for me to seek employment—something otherwise than poetry to do. No one but Mr. Noyes can make a living from the writing of poetry. I have tried to, but the cost of living is too high. I must find something else to do. Newspaper work I am not fitted for; I know nothing at all about it. I can write poetry—God, what a commentary on inability that is! Could there be anything worse in the eyes of the world! If I had devoted myself to medicine or to the law for the thirty years I have devoted myself to poetry, I would not be writing you thus, but be comfortably fixed in the goods of the world.

You know how I was situated when I first met you—in a poolroom here in Louisville. That business disgusted me and I took to buying and selling stocks, and did well for twenty years. Last year and this one tell a different tale. Wall Street has finally gotten me and my little bank account, as it always gets the small moneyed man who has a family to support, and especially the man who has aesthetic ambitions.

If you know of anything or of anyone who could help me to some sort of a position, political or otherwise, will you kindly let me know? Thanking you beforehand, I am your friend, Madison Cawein.

1913, April 18.

Mrs. John L. Woodbury, Secretary: Mrs. Cawein and I accept with pleasure the invitation of the Literature Club to be present on April twenty-fifth at the presentation of the bust to the Louisville Free Public Library. My little son, Preston, accepts with thanks your request that he participate in the presentation ceremonies.

We all feel honored and delighted with the favors the Literature Club has heaped upon me and would take this occasion to thank you, one and all, for what you have done out of admiration for my work and appreciation of poetry. Nothing like this, the public presentation of a bronze bust of a living poet or author, to a library and a city, has ever occurred in Louisville before, probably in no city before. This is something to boast of to future generations. It is a distinction, something that the community we live in cannot and never will forget.

I thank you individually and collectively, also every man and woman outside the Literature Club, who contributed a dollar to the bust. Very sincerely yours, Madison Cawein.

1913, April 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: The woods are beautiful now. These ideal days of April are just the thing for vim, but spring makes me sad, remembering springs past and friends that are gone. * * * This week I had another book, *Minions of the Moon*, accepted by Stewart and Kidd Company, of Cincinnati, for publication in the fall. It is to be a Christmas book. This makes two books of mine they have taken to publish at their own expense. * * *

1913, April 20.

Eric Pape: I don't know what I'm going to do. Do you? I inclose a little note which will tell you I'm to be honored, publicly, with a bust, by the city of Louisville. They still think I write poetry, you see, and show their appreciation in this way. I'd rather have a pension any old day than a bust. But I must take the things the Lord sends—and in Him I trust. * * *

1913, April 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: This afternoon at five o'clock the bust of Madison Cawein is to be presented to Louisville and placed and unveiled in the Public Library, the Mayor accepting it for the city. Preston is to officiate as the unveiler. I have not seen the bronze yet, but I hear it is a fine likeness.

Tomorrow morning Gertrude and I go to Cincinnati for a day or two. John Kidd, the head of the Stewart and Kidd Company secured for us seats at the Grand Opera to be held there Saturday night. My cousin, Marie Cavan, that is Mary Cawein, sings with Mary Garden. She is a member of the Chicago Grand Opera Company. I expect to meet her for the first time in my life. I have corresponded with her, and imagine she is an interesting girl. She is still in her twenties.

I wrote Judge Walter Malone, of Memphis, about a job and he advised me to apply to the Government for a position, and that he will use his influence. But I don't know what sort of a job to apply for. Do you? He thinks President Wilson would be glad to place me in some good position in spite of the fact that I am, or have been, a Republican. I don't know. What would you advise? * * *

1913, May 4.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am now trying my hand at scenarios for the moving pictures. I have finished one and started another. I hope I'll be able to make good at these. [Mr. Cawein told me he had submitted and sold only one scenario, and that the editors having taken all the poetry out of it, he declined to let his name appear as author. As far as I know the scenario was never produced.] * * *

1913, May 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The bronze bust is a fine likeness. The lips are a little too thick, perhaps; the mouth is correct as to shape, however. There is no "cupid-bow" effect as *The Louisville Herald* makes it. That is due to the print. It is a great honor to have it erected as it is, while I am still in the land of the living. * * *

I shall try hard for a government place. * * * I have written to Roosevelt at the suggestion of Walter Malone, and shall write to William Jennings Bryan, for a consulship, as soon as he returns to Washington. I have selected Bermuda as the nearest and most likely. I don't know whether or not it is vacant now, or whether it is likely to be. I have written for it, however. I would rather get a place in the United States, if I could. * * *

1913, May 13.

Charles Hamilton Musgrove: * * * The book is splendid. [*Pan and Aeolus—Poems*, by Charles Hamilton Musgrove, dedicated

to Madison Cawein, 1913.] I read it last night. There are poems in this book that will make your reputation. A number of them are as fine as any thing that has ever been done in verse. * * *

1913, May 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I had a note from Bryan's private secretary, and it sounds favorable. I have gotten busy with a number of friends who are writing or going to write to Vice-President Marshall and Ollie M. James, and to Secretary Bryan and President Wilson in my behalf. * * * * Preston has just gotten over being vaccinated. He was sick, but is all right now. Gertrude, too, is well, but worried, as I am, about affairs. We are trusting in the Lord to pull us through all right. That is, I am trusting and working at the same time. Gertrude hasn't much faith in anything but Luck. Well, Luck may look our way some day again. I don't know. Anyhow, I receive lots of public notice now, if nothing else. I enclose a clipping from yesterday's *Louisville Herald*. Duncan Clark, a poet himself, is editor and did me up in style in his columns yesterday. * * *

1913, May 28.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke: I have been ill, worried and despondent, and in no fit condition to write to you. However, today I did brace up and sent you the first copy of *The Republic* that has gone out of this house. I am sorry the book is not a better one than it is. But I am experimenting, you see. Some of the verse in this book is poetry and some of it is merely verse. Some of it is as good as my best and some as bad as my worst. It is the sort of a book the public likes and will buy and read. I have another book, *Minions of the Moon*, that the same firm in Cincinnati is publishing, coming out for Xmas. This book is in my best vein, I think—all poetry, if I am not mistaken. * * * I am trying for a consulate. Thomas Nelson Page is helping me. I have to do something, you see. Page has done wonders so far. * * *

1913, May 31.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am working for that consulate. Thomas Nelson Page's letter to me is perfectly beautiful. He went personally and saw Ollie M. James and Secretary Bryan, and pointed out to them and other senators what literary men had done in the consular service: Hays, Howells, Taylor, Hawthorne and Lowell. The consular position comes under the Civil Service regulations and rules and requirements, and in that examination is where I'll fall down, I fear. * * *

1913, JUNE 4.

Miss Harriet Monroe: * * * Neihardt's "Death of Agrippina," in the May number of your magazine [*Poetry, a Magazine of Verse*] is the *best* thing you have published so far, in my opinion. The less of that Ezra Pound stuff you put in your pages the better it will be for the future of *Poetry*. Walt Whitman gone mad, without the grace and sound common sense of Whitman to redeem the platitude and lack of poetic form and inspiration. A boy could write such stuff by the yard without any mental effort whatever. May God help us, who love real poetry, if this is the kind of verse we are to be doomed to read in the next decade. * * *

1913, JUNE 12.

Miss Harriet Monroe: I return, as you requested, the clipping from the *Chicago Post*. Floyd Dell, the editor, whose verses I have seen occasionally, is just the man to admire Ezra Pound's work. He is young, too, and full of fire, desirous of smashing precedents in poetry, as well as poets themselves of established reputations. I have seen some of his sledge hammer reviews of such poets. Time will work the whole matter out justly, I think. I am very willing to trust to its judgment. I cannot bring my poetical faculties into sympathy with that kind of work, nor with this new poet's from India, that everybody is praising now; nor with several others whose work is more like prose than poetry—that poet's, for instance, whose long "poem," "The Green Cage," appears in the June *Atlantic*, though I must admit the thoughts are startling and often the wording is beautiful. I still maintain that form and rhythm and music are absolutely necessary to the making of good poetry. Yours cordially, Madison Cawein.

1913, JUNE 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I have lots of letters from people anxious to help me. All of them are most friendly and kind. I hear nothing from the big guns. I had a letter from Dr. Van Dyke the other day offering his assistance, which of course I accepted. He has been appointed minister to the Netherlands, and Thomas Nelson Page is ambassador to Italy, and Meredith Nicholson is minister to Portugal. So you see the President favors the literary men still. * * * I have nothing new to write. The hot weather kind o' knocks the props from under me. * * *

George Grey Barnard, the great sculptor, Eric Pape's brother-in-law, is in town. He has been employed by the government to

do a statue of Abraham Lincoln, and is down here to find a model to pose for him. He is a brilliant man, and most enthusiastic about art and poetry. He is offering ten dollars a day for a good model, and advertising for one in the newspapers. I told him he would have to go to the mountains and find his model there. He is going, for he is a man that brooks no delay and is filled with energy. * * *

1913, JULY 1.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I had a letter yesterday from Swager Sherley, our congressman, in which he speaks of an ambassadorship for me. He and William Jennings Bryan had a long talk together about me, and this was the result. I don't know where they will send me, but I fear that the expenses of being minister are so great that I shall have to refuse on account of lack of funds. The salary attached to such a position is inadequate, they say, and often the rent of the house for a year takes the entire amount of the salary. It's a great honor, however. I can't see how I could make both ends meet if I'd accept, if offered to me. I can't afford with my small means to undertake anything that is going to require more than my income from my position. * * *

1913, JULY 9.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am copying some poems for a little book of nature poems I am getting ready for the American Book Company, for use in schools. I don't know whether they will accept my book or not when it is ready but, at their suggestion, I am at work on it. Nature work in public schools has become quite a factor lately, and it would be quite a factor if I succeeded in placing a series of Cawein Nature Books with the American Book Company. I am going up to Cincinnati the end of July to see Mr. W. T. H. Howe about the book and deliver the first manuscript to him. * * *

1913, JULY 20.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Gertrude and I are going to Cincinnati, for two or three days, on Thursday coming. I am taking my *MS.* of "Vacation Days" with me to show to Mr. Howe of the American Book Company. It is a compilation of some of my nature poems connected, or linked together, with a boy's story of a vacation in the country hereabouts [near Brownsboro, Kentucky]. It is reminiscent of my own boyhood. I don't know how it will do for schools, but I

got the book together for Mr. Howe who thinks of making a school book of it. [The title was changed to *The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road*, and published by John P. Morton & Company at their own expense.]

What do you think of the new laureate, Robert Bridges? A fine selection, I think. I have always loved his poetry. That poem of his called "A Song" is beautiful, one of the most beautiful in the English Language. * * * And then his poem on "A Dead Child," is wonderfully beautiful. The wiseacres of the Eastern papers and magazines, so cock-sure that Alfred Noyes or W. B. Yeats, or some other smasher of Classical English would be made poet laureate, are completely confounded. They never even dreamed this distinguished, retiring man, Bridges, would be made poet laureate. A fine selection, a poet worthy of all honor, and a worthy successor of Tennyson and Wordsworth. He is nearly seventy years old and with the exception of a few admirers, has, like myself and other humble poets, written and lived in obscurity, published his books at his own expense, in limited editions, or having them published by friends at their expense. But sometimes merit is appreciated and found out by a reluctant government. * * *

1913, JULY 24.

Charles G. Roth: * * * You say you look through my books for reminiscences of our boyhood's play place, Rock Springs. Well, this little book, *The Republic*, is full of them. I'll point out two poems you must read and then close your eyes and think back. The first is "Happiness," page 25. You remember Owlet's Roost. You remember the pond where we used to shoot frogs. After reading "Happiness" turn to page 62 and read "The Road Back" and then stay with me a while in The Land o' Dreams. "The Briar Rose" is another one of 'em, and also "An Idyll," on page 38. Well, the book is full of 'em.

Gertrude and Preston, our son who is nine years old now, and I send love to both you and your wife. We'll never forget that hour or so we spent with you at the old St. Nicholas Hotel, between trains in Cincinnati, three or four years ago. Your cousin, Madison Cawein.

1913, SEPTEMBER 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Nothing new has transpired since writing you. I am trying to possess my soul in patience until I hear something definite from Washington. I am writing in the

meantime and trying to get the poems taken by the magazines. My new book, *Minions of the Moon*, will be ready next week, I think. But the trouble about all my books is they sell so few and the royalties are really nothing. A poet ought never to marry. Being a poet, it's the mistake of my life. Nothing but worry and the grind of keeping a family up and enough money to live respectably on. No, a poet ought never to marry. When he does he marries trouble along with the girl, and when a baby comes there is more trouble. We are all well. Preston is going to school; he is in the fourth grade, doing long division and fractions. He is a bright boy, if I do say so. * * *

1913, September 25.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * No, don't say anything to that friend of yours, of ours, about my being hard up. He's like all the other rich bugs in that respect—"Sorry, but I can't help you. Hard up myself." That's what the rich bugs always say to the poor bug—nothing doing. But I'll win out yet, some way, somehow. The devil's loose in the world and playing mischief with the peace of mind of a lot of us. He'll be caged some day, and then look out. In the meantime I am writing my poems and waiting, waiting. Patience is a great blessing for those who have it, but at times I can't but rebel against the thorns and burrs of adversity that strew the mortal highway. * * *

1913, October 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have no news for you at all, except that my book, new book, *Minions of the Moon*, has failed to put in an appearance as yet, and that I have heard nothing, absolutely nothing, from Washington. I suppose nothing will come out of my application for a consulate. I sent you this morning a copy of *Poetry Magazine* published in Chicago. It contains a poem of mine, "The Old Home," in my usual style.

Preston and Gertrude are well. Preston is growing and going to the ward schools, fighting his way along and in fine fettle. A fine boy—big and robust—and the consolation of our lives. He is always interested in something—ducks, chameleons and kittens. But the ducks, I think, have his preference. He is a little darling, a straight, fine, good-looking youngster whom I love to take in the woods with me now and then to hunt mushrooms and pawpaws. He loves nature. * * *

1913, October 13.

Eric Pape: * * * The world, I see, is treating you beautifully. I am glad of it. You should be happy. Success like yours as an artist comes to few. I congratulate you on your exhibit [in Boston]. You can paint, old boy, no doubt of it. You are a famous man. * * * You are a great artist. I said this before I ever met you, and I say it now with emphasis. Go on! Do! Accomplish! Achieve! * * *

1913, October 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * We are still waiting for something to happen, something good, I mean, but it never does happen. Not a word from Washington, and I suppose they have forgotten all about me up there, doing all they can to pass the tariff and currency bills. * * *

1913, November 7.

Stark Young: * * * I wish I could have been with you in Greece—in the Vale of Tempe at any rate. It must have been perfect. But I suppose I shall never go abroad. Things are not favorable. Finances go from bad to worse, and poetry brings nothing in—a few dollars at the most. It is true publishers publish my books [some of them] at their own expense, but the return in royalties amount to very little, very little indeed. I suppose I am fortunate to find a publisher and ought to be satisfied. But a poet has to live the same as a bricklayer, you know. I agree with you entirely as to the poetry that is finding most favor in this country at the present time. Enterprise, or progress, seems to be the subject matter of most of the poetry written now. Hardly that, now, either; more attention is being paid to the prostitute and the white slave. Little music or beauty in any of it. * * *

1913, November 19.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I just returned from Chicago a day or two ago. I had a great time. Harrison S. Morris, who invited me and paid all my expenses, was perfectly grand to me. We attended a joint meeting of the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. We were entertained royally and had a great audience at the open meeting in the Art

Institute. My poem "The Song of Songs" [especially written for the occasion] went off all right and received much applause. * * * One club after another vied to do us honor, feasting us and showing us all sorts of attention. Champagne simply flowed. Indeed it was a glorious victory for the West which outdid the East by about one hundred to one in hospitality. * * *

1913, NOVEMBER 21.

Honorable Secretary of the Authors' Club, London: After careful consideration and the reading of various papers by English writers in the various English reviews, such as the one on American Art in the current number of the *English Review*, and observing the general attitude of them all to American poetry, I have come to the conclusion that under the circumstances I can no longer remain a member of the Authors' Club and retain my self respect as an American poet and citizen. I therefore, with regret, hereby tender my resignation to the Authors' Club and beg to remain with respect, very truly yours, Madison Cawein.

1913, NOVEMBER 24.

Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse: Your little book of selections [*The Little Book of Modern Verse*] came to us last week, and Gertrude and I have been enjoying it ever since its arrival. I think that you were very happy in making your selections and in including the poets you did include. I notice that you omitted several good friends of mine, however, which I wonder at. Mr. Robert U. Johnson, R. W. Gilder, and Harrison S. Morris. The last, I think, has done some wonderful sonnets in his *Madonna and Other Poems*, and in his last volume published about two years ago by The Century Company. But you know best about their exclusion.

Gertrude is going to write a paper for her Club, The Womans' Club, here in Louisville, and is rejoicing over the book which she will use in preparing her article. It is a lovely little volume and the arrangement of the poems as you have made it, is very charming. The poem of Riley's that you use at the end is a good colophon and the opening poem by Bliss Carman is, in my opinion, the best one Carman ever wrote. I wish you had included more of this type of poetry and given us little, less, or nothing of the type of "Da Leetla Boy" by Daly, whose poems I do not consider literature in spite of what you people think of them in New York and Philadelphia, and despite the fact that Kennerly gave him a prize in the *Lyric Year*. All in all, however, the book is fine to have, and I rejoice in it and in your having done it. Gertrude does also and sends her love and thanks. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1913, December 15.

Algernon Rose, Honorable Secretary, Authors' Club, London: Kindly permit me to recall my resignation from the Authors' Club. It was foolish of me to let my irritation over an article in the *English Review* of November last lead me to resign from a club like the Authors' Club, which has always treated with kindness and magnanimity American Art and Letters.

The insult in the article in the *English Review*, upon the ability of our poet, essayist, and diplomat, James Russell Lowell, filled me with such indignation at the time I read this irresponsible article that I could do nothing else, it seemed to me, at that time, but cut away from England completely.

I was wrong, and am sorry for the haste in writing the Club as I did, and herewith withdraw my resignation, and remain, faithfully yours, Madison Cawein.

1913, December 16.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * By the way, talking of money, Preston and I made a raise last week. We sold five autograph volumes of James Whitcomb Riley to a Philadelphia rare-book buyer for $150.00. Think of it! One copy wasn't even a Riley book, but a little story called *The Tailor of Gloucester* which Riley sent Preston in 1907, inscribed with a little poem addressed "To my long-invisible playmate, Preston H. Cawein," and followed by a little poem. Preston got $50.00 in gold for it, of which he gave his mother $5.00 and put the rest in bank. Quite a Christmas gift for us, and it helps out, I can tell you. I also had poems taken by *The North American Review*, and *Scribner's Magazine* and *Youth's Companion*. * * *

1914, January 1.

R. E. Lee Gibson: How glad it makes me feel to write 1914 above there! I think 1913 proved itself to be the worst hoodoo year the world has known this century. May we have no more of them is my devout wish. * * * I mailed you a small new booklet, a brochure, a new poem of mine published by the Forest Craft Guild, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, called *The Days of Used to Be*. This booklet is one of the three I got out for Christmas, all beautifully adorned, colored by hand, and attractive in many ways. The other two are *Christmas Rose and Leaf* and *Whatever the Path*.

I have received a summons to Washington, I believe I told you, to stand a Civil Service examination on the nineteenth; but I don't think I'll go. The examination is too hard, and I have no time to prepare myself for it. [And thus ended Mr. Cawein's efforts to procure a government appointment.] * * *

1914, JANUARY 7.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I find myself worried as to the future. I wish to God I was like the "niggers" and didn't look ahead! They are the happiest people in the world. They never worry about tomorrow as the white folks do. It seems to me that bills never cease falling, falling like the snows of February. And where to get the money to pay them is the question. I have been trying to sell our house, but nobody wants it. We keep well, however, and Gertrude and Preston are happy. I do not bother them with my troubles. We took Preston the other night to see the Stratford-on-Avon Players in Hamlet. He was wild about it. I, too, thought it a finer performance than Sothern and Marlowe could put up. I met F. R. Benson, the star, several times and introduced Preston and Gertrude to him. He is a fine appreciative spirit. * * *

1914, JANUARY 21.

Cale Young Rice: In *At the World's Heart* is some of the finest poetry you have ever written. I am particularly taken with "Submarine Mountains" and with the quiet beauty, perfect in every way, of your sea pieces, especially "Sighting Arabia," and also the more thoughtful and reminiscent poem, "Pageants of the Sea," that holds me like the sound of ocean itself.

Your little dramatic lyric of India and Japan, put into such lines and stanzas as you give us in "The Peasant of Gotemba," "The Pilgrim," "The Malay to His Master," etc., are perfect in their way. The poems to Alice [Songs to A. H. R.—Mrs. Alice Hegan Rice] are lovely lyrics. No question about it! They reveal a different side of your genius from that which you portray in your dramatic and descriptive poems of far wanderings. The poem, "Beauty and Stillness," which I read first in the current number of *The North American Review*, strikes me as being finer than any I have read for many a day, either by an English or an American poet. It's an immortal work of art. Success and happiness to you. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1914, February 21.

Eric Pape: * * * We have moved from our house. We are living in a flat [The St. James Apartment House, St. James Court]. across the Court from it. [They rented out their home and moved into smaller and less expensive quarters.] Adversity has smitten us hip and thigh. I have lost every thing I ever had. Gone to the winds. Not exactly lost, you understand, but just lived away. The years have consumed it. * * *

1914, April 20.

Miss Jessie B. Rittenhouse: You heard correctly. At the invitation of Clinton Scollard I am coming to New York the end of this month, April, for a brief stay. I am trying to find something to do, and Scollard suggests that I come on to New York for a week or two and share his room with him at The Century Club. Mrs. Clarence de Vaux Royer wants me to come also, and is arranging for me to give a reading in the fall from my poems before the Cameo Club. I asked $250.00 for the same and tickets are selling very well, she tells me. They paid Alfred Noyes $1,000, she tells me, for an hour's reading a year or so ago, and although I am an American I think I am worth $250.00 and won't take a cent less. [This reading was indefinitely postponed on account of the war].

I go to Purdue University to read, an evening and a morning, on the twenty-second and twenty-third of April, this week, and after my return I shall start for New York. * * *

1914, June 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I hope you will have the operation performed on your eye and that you will have your eyesight restored again as good as ever. * * * Your condition, with the death of my life-long Louisville friend, Marvin Eddy, has depressed me. * * *

1914, July 23.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Preston is getting along nicely again in the Boys' Club at Chautauqua [New York] and Gertrude is enjoying the lectures. She reads from my poems in the Hall of Philosophy tomorrow. She is taking a course in reading up there, with a view of doing something as a maker of money. She is a singer and has a fine stage presence, too, and she ought to make something out of the readings if she ever gets a chance. * * *

1914, August 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * You certainly have your trials and tribulations, old man, and how you keep cheerful [being temporarily, or possibly, permanently blind] under the circumstances surprises me. I'd be in the depths of despair. It's good to have a disposition like yours. * * *

1914, August 17.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * The war has put a crimp in everything. The magazines want absolutely nothing. It's a bad state of affairs, but I suppose it will right itself eventually. Business is dead as a door nail here, and I suppose it is the same everywhere. If there is a God, which I am beginning to doubt, he should take cognizance of humanity. The destruction of so many lives in Europe should make him wake up to the fact that his children are suffering. For my part I would be just as well off dead as living. It is terrible and there seems little hope of its ever being better. What I want, as you, too, want, is peace, unbroken and unending. * * *

1914, August 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: Gertrude and Preston returned home from Chautauqua last Wednesday, and both look fine. Gertrude is in high spirits over her art—that is reading from plays and poems. She is going into it as a profession and hopes to make money at it. I hope so, too, as there is nothing in the world we need more at the present time than money.

I have just turned over my manuscript of *The Poet and Nature* to John P. Morton & Company for publication. I have written this book, some 250 pages, for use in the schools. * * * Its intention is to stimulate interest in poetry, poetry and nature, our poetry and our nature here in the Middle West. This is the best book I have ever written in a way, and I expect big things from it. * * *

1914, September 8.

R. E. Lee Gibson: We are all well and healthy, and if it were not for this miserable war in Europe, and finances, we would be as happy as sunflowers. I have a poem on the editorial page of the Sunday *New York Times*. It is about this unholy war, and I call it "The End of Summer." * * *

1914, September 18.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * It is almost impossible to collect money or to borrow it. Several periodicals owe me money but they will not send me checks. I may be able to borrow some money on my house, but so far the banks are loath to make loans on real estate. The war has done it, and I look for worse times this winter. * * *

1914, September 24.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I am glad that the operation on your eye proved successful. I hope that by the time you receive this letter you will be able to read again. * * * Life has heaped burdens past endurance upon your head. You have weathered the ordeal. Now Miss Fortune will give Good Fortune an opportunity, I hope. * * * I am busy with proof of *The Poet and Nature*; I think the book will be a good one. I hope to get it into the schools here. * * *

1914, September 29.

Clinton Scollard: I am still busy with proofs [*The Poet and Nature and The Morning Road*] and expect to be for another two weeks or so. If I can do so I am coming to New York as soon as finances permit. I should like to get there to attend the joint meeting of the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters in November. I suppose you will attend this year, being right on the spot as you are. I hope some day to see you in your flat and sit by that window you indicate, and write—not *war* poems—but *nature* poems again. I clipped your "At Rheims" from the *Sun* yesterday. It is a fine poem. Indeed the only good poetry written about the war so far has been by American poets, not English ones, I think.

I received a check yesterday from Mr. Rossiter Johnson, treasurer of the Authors' Club of New York, for $100, which was manna from heaven to me. Mr. Hobart C. Chatfield-Taylor and Professor Brander Matthews presented my case, and although I am not a member of the Authors' Club, I was placed on the relief list at once. This is as good as England with her civil list. Thank God for those who recognize the poets and think of them occasionally. [This monthly allowance was continued until shortly after Mr. Cawein's death]. Your friend, Madison Cawein.

1914, October 3.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * Gertrude keeps pegging away at her work, and manages to forge ahead. She is a splendid reader of drama, and I think will make a hit if she ever has an opportunity to

let herself be heard. She has some great modern plays to read and she reads them, I tell you.

I want to go next week on my long-deferred trip to Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, to look the people and the country over. Otto A. Rothert has made arrangements for us, Young E. Allison and myself, to go with him. I hope we can do it. [We left Louisville October 8.] * * *

1914, October 16.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I have just returned from Muhlenberg County where I had some interesting experiences and met with some queer characters. I read at the High School in Greenville, on the morning of the ninth, and was breakfasted and dined nobly. Out on Rothert's tract of timber land, where we spent most of our time, we went on a fox hunt. We visited a number of old Indian mounds, old farms and old graveyards. It was a fine trip.

On my return found things as usual, and Preston up and well again; also a letter from Oglethorpe University—from which Woodrow Wilson graduated—inviting me as "the most distinguished poet of the South" to write and read an Ode at the laying of its corner stone—a new one—the middle of January. I accepted, of course, and shall as soon as I receive data begin on the work. Sidney Lanier was a professor at Oglethorpe, and wrote an Ode for it in 1871. * * *

1914, October 16.

Bert Finck: Your *Musings on the Lounge* has been read, and has afforded me great pleasure. I find in it a more sobering and quieting effect than in your *Pebbles* and your *Plays*. There is an advance also in a terse command of English—more epigrammatic than in the predecessors. Good luck to you, as ever. I hope you will realize something from this little book. May your shadow never grow less, and may the little book dispel, obliterate all other shadows from your life and the troubled lives of many others. * * *

1914, November 10.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am having an interesting time sitting for an oil painting. I spent nearly every afternoon in the studio of my friend Alberts, the past week or so, posing. The portrait will soon be complete, life size. It shows me at a table with a manuscript in my hand. While he paints I sit in a chair and he, Rothert and I talk. I'm enjoying it and will be sorry when it's over. I like the picture and so does Gertrude, and I am sure you will, too, and I hope that will be soon. * * *

1914, November 13.

R. E. Lee Gibson: * * * I am leaving Louisville for New York City, again to be the guest of Clinton Scollard for a week or two. I go on Monday to look around there for something to do. I don't know what, but I must get something to do. * * * We all keep in good health and try to keep up our spirits. It's a bad lot, this trying to live in this age of wars and commercialism. * * *

1914, November 22, New York.

R. E. Lee Gibson: I find a depression here that equals ours in the Middle West. No one has anything to offer. All you hear is the Great War. The meeting of the Institute and the Academy is over. I am with Clinton Scollard. I saw Mr. Howells the other morning and he looks fine. Frank Dempster Sherman comes over to join Scollard and me often, and we smoke and talk. * * *

I went with Timothy Cole, the engraver, Robert Underwood Johnson and Edwin Markham to visit J. Pierpont Morgan's wonderful library yesterday. I saw a number of original manuscripts there: Keats', Shelley's, Poe's, Byron's, etc; Keats' lock of hair, and the manuscript of Shelley's "Indian Serenade" taken from his pocket after drowning, in a deplorable state, but still decipherable; Poe's "Annabel Lee" and "The Bells;" "Endymion" complete, even the introduction; Byron's "Don Juan" in entirety; Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" and Scott's "Lady of the Lake," complete, and more other manuscripts of various authors, poets and novelists than I can remember—Hawthorne's and Longfellow's, etc., all were handsomely bound. * * *

1914, November 28.

R. E. Lee Gibson: [This letter is marked in Gibson's handwriting: "The last letter from my dear friend Madison Cawein, the poet. He died December 8, 1914. R. E. L. G." It is here quoted in full.] My dear Lee: Your letter came on the date of my arrival home from New York. Before I left New York I met, in the Century Club, my good friend Dr. Henry Van Dyke, just returned from Holland for a short trip home. He was as gay as a lark and looked as well, if not better than ever. I think he is on a peace mission from The Hague, where, you know, he is minister.

Clinton Scollard left last Wednesday for Washington to visit his mother, for several weeks, who resides there. I found it too lonesome by myself in his apartment and left the following day, Thanksgiving, for home. I found Gertrude and Preston well as usual, and everything moving along as usual.

In New York there was a lot of depression, but some optimism nevertheless. I attended the Poetry Society meeting where one of my poems, "The Old Dreamer," was read. Met there all the poets of the younger set who are doing good work.

My new book, *The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road*, will be out the last day of next week, and I shall take great pleasure in sending you a copy; also one to De Menil whose good wishes I count upon to get the book taken in the schools of St. Louis.

I hope you will get something to do soon. I'm in the same box myself. The outlook is somewhat dark for me, but I keep pegging on. Love from all to you and Elaine. Your friend, Madison.

[As far as known, this letter, Cawein's last one to Gibson, is the last letter he wrote.]

IX

LETTERS RECEIVED BY CAWEIN

Madison Cawein received many letters, but saved comparatively few. Some were thrown into the waste basket after they had been answered, others were saved; many of those he gave away are now scattered, others destroyed; and some were sold. Any of his friends and acquaintances who asked for an autograph letter that had been written to him by this or that distinguished author was likely to get the original if Cawein felt that by presenting it he was encouraging an interest in literature.

In the spring of 1913—about two years before his death—while making preliminary preparations to rent out his large residence and move into smaller and less expensive quarters, he sold many of his books because he had no place to store them, and, furthermore, as he saw the state of his finances, he thought he needed the money. For the same reasons he sold some of his letters. The fact that he had sold many of his books and letters was not known, as far as I am aware, to any of his friends. Pride predominated; had he divulged the exact state of his monetary affairs to any of his intimate friends, in or out of Louisville, who were practical business men, they not only could have shown him that he was not as near to bankruptcy as he supposed, but many would have given him financial aid. The officials of the Authors' Club of New York and the board of trustees of the University of Louisville deserve great credit for the action they took in their efforts to relieve Cawein after they learned that he had met with financial reverses.

At any rate, on one of his last trips East he took a bundle of letters with him and sold the lot—probably about 150 letters—to a dealer in rare books and documents. The dealer could not recall to whom he had sold them when I made inquiry, six years later—except in one instance—for there were almost as many individual sales as letters. The only purchaser he recalled was the one who bought a number of the letters: William F. Gable, of Altoona, Pennsylvania. Mr. Gable not only submitted to me for inspection and use his col-

lection of about twenty letters that were received by or written by Cawein, but also furnished me with copies. He also permitted me to browse through his great collection of autographed books and thousands of letters written by literary and other celebrities of America and Europe of this century and of preceding times; but in none of the documents did I chance upon any reference to Cawein.

The only letters received by Cawein which I have read are the ones he retained, the few bought by Mr. Gable, those presented to Eric Pape, and the few I found in published form. All of them are more or less interesting, but bear only in an indirect way on the life and works of the poet. If these were printed in full, they alone would fill a book. The originals of the thirteen here published are in the Cawein Collection, except the two by Riley which are in the collection of William F. Gable, the one by Stedman, taken from a copy in the collection of Mrs. Laura Stedman Gould, and the one by Aldrich copied from *The New York Times*. If Cawein had saved all his letters and if from among them about a dozen of the best had been selected for publication here, it is probable that only a few of the following would have been chosen:

Louisville, Kentucky.
September 26, 1886.

Mr. Madison J. Cawein, Dear Sir: Your two latest poems have pleased me so much that I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration of them in a letter.

Your choice of subjects was a most felicitous one; far more interesting than verses on the "dead gods and goddesses" of old. He who sings for them now, is as one who serenades an empty house. They have flown, but the men and women, and the beautiful and inspiring scenes of our own country and its history still remain to be set to song.

With my best wishes for your future success as a writer, I am, yours most truly, Elvira Sydnor Miller.

[See letter Cawein to Miller, 1886, September 28, Page 175.]

Revere House, Boston.
May 27, 1888.

My dear Mr. Cawein: Your lovely little book [*The Triumph of Music*] has followed me here from New York with your letter, and I hardly know how to thank you for the gratifying inscription of the volume.

My family have been reading it with the delight that your other poems gave and I expect soon to share their pleasure.

I was greatly touched and interested by what you told me of yourself. Of course I understand your uneasiness in your present situation, and I can't think any relation to a "betting house" fortunate. But your conscience is in your own keeping, and so long as that is unspotted, you have nothing that ought really to make you unhappy. You have youth, and you have already shown mastery in verse. A life of success is before you, and it is for you to make it beautiful and beneficent or not.

I expect to be near Boston all summer, and I shall always be glad to see you. My address is in care of Harper and Brothers, New York.

With cordial regards, yours sincerely, W. D. Howells.

[See letter Cawein to Howells, 1888, May 19, Page 179.]

44 East 26th Street, New York.
May 12, 1889.

Dear Mr. Cawein: For the second time you have made me your debtor, with the delivery of a book of your poetry, and ere this you must suspect that I have gone into insolvency so far as such payment as thanks may make it concerned. I am a hard-pressed man just now, and none too vigorous withal. None the less, however, I did wish to read your second volume before acknowledging it—and that, methinks, has been the basic reason of this churlish delay.

One is a little ashamed, moreover, to accept repeated gages from a younger comrade, while out of the lists himself for the time being—and hence having naught to render in return! But my close friend, Mr. Howells, is doing Knightly duty in my stead—and I see that the honor of my generation is safe in his hands, and have been pleased to note you receiving the accolade therefrom, with so much the greater honor accruing to you than if it came from the less-renowned Crusader who is now writing you.

At last, then, I am fresh from looking through your pages, and have read your *Accolon* from beginning to end; a strongly sustained dramatic-idyl, and the whole worth your composing—since Tennyson has given Arthur's mystic sister the go-by, and I don't find echoes of his "Idyls" in your verse, but a manner different and quite your own.

Your lyrics, so notably rich in diction and color, are all of a sort to insure close attention from your brother-poets. That is indubitable. But many, while envying you your vocabulary and affluent command of rhythm, will feel that these will serve you more effectively when you draw on them with a certain eclecticism. A princess must have a varied wardrobe, with all rich stuffs from Cathay and Ind, but she dallies with her resources—not displaying all in one season, though serene with the consciousness of a reserve-equipment for the grandest occasion. If I had *your* equipment, now so thoroughly tested, and your

years before me, I would utilize the former in some way specially *American*—however delightful we all find it to roam the fields trodden by those old-world minstrels who are nearest to the hearts of all English-writing poets. There is a chance, just now, for American themes and atmosphere, and for the poet who masters them. Sincerely yours, Edmund C. Stedman.

[See letter Cawein to Mr. Stedman, 1889, May 21, Page 185.]
[See letter Cawein to Miss Stedman, 1909, January 7, Page 279.]

Indianapolis, Indiana.
October 23, 1891.

My dear Cawein: What's come of ye 'at you don't never let a fellow hear nothin' of ye anymore? Have waited and waited till I'm plum' wore out a-waitin'! Work! Well, my head whirls with it. Got some good things, though, and you'd indorse in parts anyway. Is it so, you're contemplating going East to work? O, don't do that, I beg. You're right in the country you belong in—so, at least, stay loyal to it, and let 'em send their work to you. You'll be the better for it every way. Then, every-once-in-a-while, we can go East together, as we flourish, and they'll only welcome you the heartier and honor you the more. Indeed, no money could tempt me ever to quit my home and people. I used to think different, but I was wrong, and am sorry that ever, even in youthful thought, I was ever disloyal to my own. So don't you ever go away. It will, in the end, hurt not help you. God bless you and keep you very brave and steadfast. Yours may be the first and best fame of any of America's own singers.

As ever affectionately, *Jamesie.* [Riley]

29 Delamare Terrace, London, W.
October 26, 1896.

Mr. Madison Cawein: My dear Sir: I have much to thank you for, since in sending me *The Garden of Dreams* you have made me acquainted for the first time with a poet of whose genuine mission there can be no question. I see that you have published other volumes: I am sorry that they have never fallen in my way. I find in your best pieces an intoxicating sense of beauty, a richness, that is rarely achieved, although every young poet nowadays strives after it. I find, too, a daring use of language which sometimes, nay often, conducts you to genuine and startling felicities. I am sorry that, with all your talent, you have not a greater respect for the English tongue, which you sometimes treat with unpardonable levity. What Edmund Spenser might do, when the language was still liquid, it is not allowed

to us to attempt when it is almost solid, and you spoil a beautiful lyric with the expression "pave" as a noun; there is no such English word.

I venture to write thus frankly to you because of my confidence in your talent. I get dozens of books of verse sent me from English and American writers, but it is rarely indeed that I am tempted to upbraid them. For you, I desire the most ardent and severe self-criticism since your work is worthy of it.

Yours faithfully, Edmund Gosse.

17 Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park, N. W.
August 14, 1901.

My dear Mr. Cawein: Once more I have to thank you for the very kind gift of a volume of your poems. I often wish that your work was better known over here. Have you ever thought of making an arrangement for a selection from your poems to be published in London? I should be very glad if I could help you to carry this out.

I have often been asked to be sponsor for American poets, and I have always refused, for unless one is quite in sympathy with a writer such a task is the heaviest of burdens. But to you—who have never suggested such a thing—I would say that it would be a great and genuine pleasure to me to introduce a selection of your work, if you ever thought of such a thing. Possibly that might help the arrangement. If so, and you care to think of it, consider that you have my promise.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Cawein, very sincerely yours, Edmund Gosse.

From *The New York Times*, December 5, 1908:

T. B. Aldrich on Poetry's Decline. Hitherto Unpublished Letter to a Poet Gives a Poet's Views on the Case of his Art.

By the kind permission of Mr. Madison Cawein, the poet, the *New York Times Saturday Review of Books* is able to print a letter to Mr. Cawein from the late Thomas Bailey Aldrich on a subject which lately has been much discussed in the columns of the *Review*, namely, the Decline of Poetry:

Ponkapog, Massachusetts.
October 7, 1902.

My dear Mr. Cawein: As I once said among some notes in *The Century Magazine:* "There is always a heavy demand for fresh mediocrity. In every generation the least cultivated taste has the largest appetite." At the present moment dialectic inanities with a

pleasant jingle to them find a ready market. Purely meditative poetry, poems of landscape without figures of human action, never had a large sale in this country or any other country.

But if any one of our poets of to-day were to produce a poem like "Evangeline" or "Snow-Bound," he would lack neither publisher nor readers. The stagnation of the poetry market is not the fault of the lovers of poetry, but of the makers of it. The kind that is wanted is not forthcoming. When the right note is struck, there will be a loud response. Kipling's "Recessional" found as many listeners as any poet could desire. Longfellow is the only American poet that ever made an ample yearly income (say ten or fifteen thousand dollars) by his verse. The poetical works of Lowell, Whittier, Bryant, and Emerson have met with only a moderate sale. Whittier's one notable success (financially) was "Snow-Bound," of which 20,000 copies were sold in the year of publication. I am told by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Company that the demand for Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, &c., has not fallen off. Small volumes of verse by men less famous are as remunerative as ever they were. During the last five years H. M. & Co. have published (at their own expense) a score of such volumes. Several of them did not pay for the binding, several have been reprinted (in editions of 700 copies) two or three times. This is just the same fortune that would have attended these books had they been published twenty-five or thirty years ago.

The situation in England is similar to that in the United States. In each case the one poet who had a great following is dead, and no one has come to take his place. Is it the fault of the public, or the poet who doesn't come? Perhaps he is with us incognito. When Keats was laid in his grave at Rome, there were not twelve—no; there were not two—men in England who suspected that a great poet had been laid at rest. Leigh Hunt had a strong idea that Keats was a fine poet, but not as fine a poet as Leigh Hunt. Byron, Moore, Rogers, and Southey could not read "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "Hyperion." No great poet (except, possibly, in the case of Tennyson) was ever immediately popular; by immediately I mean in the poet's lifetime. Tennyson was neglected for years.

I believe in a splendid literary future for this country. After the all-absorbing novelists have run their course, we shall have a generation, not of poets, perhaps, but of dramatists—blank verse fellows. Imagination is not going to come to nothing in a vast nation like ours. I would like to look in on the United States a hundred and fifty years from now! Maybe I should come across volume upon volume of annotations on "Cawein's Poems," wrongly attributed to J. Whitcomb Riley, or perhaps to Bacon, for there will still be material for the foolkiller in 2052 A. D.

So put all your thought and soul and art into the verses you are writing to-day . . . It is enough to be a poet.

His work outlives him—there's his glory!

Begging your pardon for sending you such a tiresome screed, I am, yours sincerely, T. B. Aldrich.

[See letter Cawein to Aldrich, 1902, October 12, Page 237.]

48 West 59th Street, New York.
January 11, 1903.

My dear Cawein: I have both your books; the English one [*Kentucky Poems*] I have read, and the newer collection [*A Voice on the Wind*] I am expecting to read when I get time. I need not praise them to you, for you know what I think of your work, but I thank you for them. I did not find Gosse's introduction warm enough, but it is much for an Englishman to be even tepid toward a man of another nation.

I wish I could say something to comfort you in your evil days, and I do think you are mistaken about the Eastern indifference to Western poetry. Is the East indifferent to Riley? Your poetry is too fine and good for the popular taste; that is all. It is by far the best we are now having; but you have not widened your course, much and the successive volumes, while they add to the sum of beauty which you have created, do not appeal with novelty to a sign-seeking generation. It is cold comfort to remind you that you have your gift, a lovely and exquisite gift, and you have the recognition of the best; but you must try to make the most of that, since you have the means of living along with it. What other American poet has been reprinted in London, except Riley? Cheer up!

Yours ever, W. D. Howells.

Indianapolis, Indiana.
January 11, 1904.

Dear Cawein: Thank you—*thank* you! for the patient query reminding me of not having sent you a copy of the last book. Now I *do* send it, though I've been waiting all this time for a *corrected* edition—*this* one (issued while I was on the road) being simply *measled* with typographical errors, and of such monstrosity—*some* of 'em—I marvel even that the hand with which I write is not this instant soppin'-warm-and-wet with printer's blood!—as Browning might put it—"*Gr-r-r!*" Nay, then, dear heart, 'tis not with *thee* I'mst angry, but the damnst printer-knave who hath unleashed all hell's perversities of misbegotten words and deeds across my lilied lawns of virgin verse! Soh! Sainted Browning, "*G-r-r*" at the Kuss, for me forever-more!

Write me if book safely reaches you. Your always faithful, *Jamesy.* [Riley]

Never in better health, body and soul!

Oyster Bay, New York.

August 22, 1907.

My dear Mr. Cawein: I am deeply touched by your kindness. I hope I need not say how I value the books and the special illustrations, together with the manuscript copy of your "Ode at Gloucester" [An Ode in Commemoration of the Founding of Massachusetts Bay Colony in the Year 1623]. Will you thank Mr. Pape most cordially for me and say how very much I appreciate the gift of the pictures? Let me say also that I particularly value the verses you have yourself written on the title pages of the books. Did you divine, or did I tell you that "Noera" and the four lines you quote from "Indian Summer" are among my special favorites?

Again let me thank you. You are one of the Americans who are doing good work for America just when she most needs it, and I prize your friendship and wish you all good luck.

By the way, I was rather interested to think that I of Dutch blood should be making a speech, and you of German should be reading a poem, at the Pilgrim celebration. When did your ancestors come here?

With warm regards to Mrs. Cawein, believe me, faithfully yours, Theodore Roosevelt.

[See Letter Cawein to Roosevelt, 1907, August 25, Page 267.]

Avalon, Princeton, New Jersey.

October 16, 1911.

A letter to the Book of Chosen Poems of my friend Madison Cawein—[*Poems*, published 1911].

Dear Book:

You have been my companion now for nearly a month; resting quietly at my elbow while I was working; and in the moments of leisure, at the sunset hour, or in the midnight, ever ready to give me a song, or a dream, or a word of intimate communion.

Part of you is twilight—glad dawn or tender eve; and part of you is midnight—dark and potent. I like the first part of you most, though I feel the force of the other part.

Of all that you have brought to me, perhaps the purest pleasure came with my already beloved "Noera" and "Fern-Seed." They are lovely things. But haven't you changed the name of the latter [to "The Spell"]? Why? But I forgive you.

"One Who Loved Nature," "Revealment," "Preludes," and all your inward poems in this vein, touching the unseen landscapes and the songs unsung, are delightful to me.

But the great thing is your magic of description—sometimes almost bewildering. What fairy gardens, haunted woods, and living waters you have! What great months run and march through your years! "March," "October," "May," "November"—you make me wonder at them all, and almost forget that I am the sworn lover of June and April.

And then you take a double-handful of wonderful things, jewels of vision, and string them on a single thread—a long, lucid, priceless necklace of "Intimations of the Beautiful."

And then you drop them and wander into mystic deeps of sorrow with "Poppy and Mandragora."

Or you strike out for the hills with "A Road Song."

Or you bid me follow the garden ways of other days, believing that there is some one there who dreams "Sunset Dreams."

Yes, "There are Fairies," and they have entered into you, dear Book, and I thank you for letting me see some of them.

Go back to your Master, little Book, and tell him what you have done for his friend. Tell him that with a single phrase you have often revealed a hidden thing; and with a single touch you have set a full chant singing, overtones and undertones; and with a linked song you have made the whole day musical. Tell him this, and bear my greeting to the Poet, and bid him be glad of his Art. And then come back to me, for I want you and must keep you.

Your grateful reader, Henry Van Dyke.

[See letter Cawein to Van Dyke, 1911, October 21, Page 302.]

Authors' Club, 2 Whitehall Court, London, S. W.
4th December, 1913.

Madison Cawein, Esq., Dear Sir: It is with great regret that I receive your letter of the 21st ultimo. You seem to have been unfortunate in the English papers and reviews you have read, because I can assure you that there is every admiration in this country for good American poetry, and it is lamentable, because of an imaginary unfriendly feeling or lack of appreciation in this country towards the lyrical works of our trans-Atlantic cousins, that you should, on that account, desire to withdraw from membership of the Authors' Club.

We have welcomed on very many occasions poets from your side of the water and they have, I think, found themselves in very happy surroundings here. My Committee hope that on reconsideration you will decide to continue your membership of the Authors' Club, at least for another year. We are shortly issuing a revised List of Members and I hope that your name will be included in it. Please send me a further letter on receipt of this note. Yours faithfully, Algernon Rose, Hon. Sec.

[See letter Cawein to Authors' Club, 1913, November 21, Page 321.]

Letters Received

Authors' Club, 2 Whitehall Court, London, S. W.
23rd December, 1913.

Madison Cawein, Esq., Dear Sir: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. and am very glad to know that you recall your resignation from the Authors' Club. In this country, where newspapers publish extraordinary statements, we are accustomed to having our most cherished poets vilified. Only recently there were some very disgraceful articles appeared belittling Chaucer and, of course, we are tired to death of the way in which Shakespeare has been traduced. I can assure you that Russell Lowell holds a very high place in the estimation of lovers of poetry in this country.

The recent dinner of the Authors' Club, which was given to the American Ambassador and Mrs. Page, which was attended by 520 members and guests, should show you that there is a very friendly feeling amongst the members towards writers in America.

With best wishes for the New Year, believe me, yours sincerely, Algernon Rose, Hon. Sec.

[See letter Cawein to Authors' Club, 1913, December 15, Page 322.]

X

PUBLISHED COMMENTS AND REVIEWS BY CAWEIN

Seven Articles Written by Cawein

Poetry and the Public, *The Courier-Journal*, 1902
"The Far Horizon," *The New York Times*, 1907
Our American Poets, *The Louisville Evening Times*, 1907
"The Dragnet," *The Louisville Evening Times*, 1909
The Best Poem, *The New York Times*, 1914
The Future of Poetry, *The Writer's Bulletin*, 1914
The World's Real Wealth, *The Writer's Bulletin*, 1914

Courier-Journal, Louisville, December 14, 1902: Poetry and the Public. Written for *The Courier-Journal* by Madison J. Cawein.

Editor's Note: Madison J. Cawein, one of the really successful poets of the day, discusses in *The Courier-Journal* the attitude of the public and critics to poets. He deplores the lack of interest taken by modern generations and smites some hypercritical critics:

There are some things that no writer should undertake, unless he is willing to place himself in an unenviable position with regard to the public, that is often even more sensitive than a poet when it comes to being criticised. The world is always so very prone to innuendo that a writer of verse has individually expected more consideration from it than is certainly due to him, when he comes forward with his grievances. However that may be, I have undertaken to say a few things in this article that I have long desired to say, and shall begin it with the statement that never in the whole history of English literature was there ever less encouragement for the writing of serious poetry than there is at the present time.

Mr. Howells, in a recent number of *Harper's Magazine*, after considering at some length the general public's lack of interest both in the reading and writing of poetry, wound up his article by stating that

he did not believe that there ever was a better time than the present for the haters of poetry to come forward and proclaim it. Of course, his reference was to serious verse; verse that requires a certain amount of aesthetic acumen, or intellectual training, to appreciate or understand. The trouble about most people at the present day is that they do not want to be made to think, or that they are mentally lazy, and do not care to exert themselves intellectually when it comes to the reading of either prose or poetry, no matter what esoteric beauties they may contain or be suggestive of. The reading of much poor fiction is probably unfitting us for all other serious reading.

Possibly, though, it is a matter of temperament and inclination only. I was about to write education—but no one could accuse the present generation of being uneducated. Indeed, I do not think that there was ever a time in which knowledge was so generally diffused. Perhaps it is in this very fact—overeducation—that the germ of the present condition lies. Fifty years ago, when we did not have the schools that we now have, poetry was more widely read and appreciated than it is now. And at the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries it was poetry that occupied the chief place in the world of letters. Reputations were much more easily made in the writing of poetry then than they are now. Single poems and single volumes of poems, that would not create even a ripple in the great sea of literature at the present day, were published, bought and discussed by a class of people who at the present time absolutely ignore all poetry. The writers of those generations never dreamed that prose would eventually usurp the high place occupied by poetry; and that the modern novel, with its phenomenal sales, would finally overshadow and probably destroy the most refined of all arts, as some huge and baleful fungus of the forest poisons a beautiful wild flower growing near it.

But it is not my intention to attempt to probe to its source the reason for this present indifference to, and neglect of, the essentials of poetry on the part of the general reading public. Probably it is the active, the strenuous life most Americans are living that unfits them for the enjoyment of this "most meditative of all arts." Then again our system of education may be at fault; too much stress may be laid upon scientific fact and not sufficient upon aesthetic fancy; too much time bestowed upon philosophy and mental science, and too little upon the myth and romance of nature. Whatever the reason may be, the fact obtains, nevertheless, that there never was a time in which, generally considered, more good poetry was being written and less read. Hardly ever does the sale of a volume of serious verse now justify its publication. The result is that at the present day there is scarcely a publishing house in this country that is willing to undertake at its own expense the publication of a volume of serious verse by a poet of even considerable reputation. Publishers as well as book-

sellers will tell you that serious poetry does not sell. Consequently very few volumes are brought out at the expense of the publisher.

Mr. Edgar Fawcett, the American novelist and poet, recently wrote me from England that a similar condition of affairs exists in London. He says that London is full of poets, excellent ones, too—though minor, of course, as all our poets are nowadays, according to the perspicacious critics—who are unable to find publishers for their poems and are compelled to publish at their own expense, if they wish to appear before the public at all.

The magazines and the newspapers then are their last resources; but very little satisfaction is to be obtained by contributing to these. In the case of the magazines, a poet is fortunate who is able to get, say, some dozen poems accepted and published in the course of a year. In the case of the newspapers, it is different, of course, but he can expect little or no remuneration for his contributions from them; and his friends as well as his enemies are liable to remark: "Oh, well, he can't get his stuff taken by the magazines, and so he gives it to the papers. It can't be much after all."

When, at last, all obstacles being overcome, the little volume is finally published at the poet's own expense, or through the aid of his friends and admirers, there is a greater trouble for him to overcome even than the finding of a publisher. A first volume by any poet has always been considered by the critics as peculiarly their legitimate prey, and it usually gets small justice, if any, at their hands. Moreover, the modern school of American magazine and newspaper criticism seems to have fallen into the hands of a lot of incapables; men who for the greater part are totally incompetent of judging a really serious book of verse. Lacking in acquaintanceship with the old classics, as well as with the best in modern poetry, one could hardly expect anything but injustice, abuse and ridicule from these self-important little Christopher Norths. This is truer of the critics of the East and North than it is of those of the South and West. And they of the East are usually more evidently violent when it comes to the criticism of a volume of poetry from the South than they are when the volume is from their own locality. The fact that a great number of the Eastern poets, male and female, write criticisms of poetry for the Eastern periodicals, may account for this.

No one would have any fault to find with true criticism, no matter how severe it might be. Many of the greatest of our poets have profited through criticism. But if a book is worthy of being criticised at all, let the criticism be true if it must be severe. But most of the big reviews in this country deem it beneath their dignity to pay any attention to poetry at all, good, bad or indifferent. The home-production is almost completely ignored. It is seldom that a volume of verse by an American is reviewed at any length in any of the big book reviews of the East. However, it is quite different when

a volume by an English or Canadian poet is in question. Occasionally a worthy poet possesses a friend, who is a critic on one of these self-constituted criterions of literary taste, and justice is done to him and his verses so long as his friend holds his position.

And ever the cry goes up, voiced most vehemently by these great organs of literary culture, that all the poets are dead! that no poetry worthy of serious consideration is being produced in this country! The question arises in my mind at once: Have they or the public ever done anything, or are they doing anything, toward the encouragement of the production of great or even true poetry? The kind of verse that is fair to find favor with both critic and public now is the sort that makes its appearance in the columns of such publications as *Life*, *Puck* and *Judge*. Dialect, nonsense and humorous rhymes are what the American public buys and reads. Only the writers of such verse can hope for appreciation from it and justice from the critics. Their volumes will sell in the thousands, where the books of the writers of real poetry will sell in the first of the numerals or not at all. This is not only true of the poets of the present day who are still writing, but also of the works of the poets who are gone. Outside of a little reading done in the colleges and High Schools, the masters of English verse are neglected. The poems of Milton, of Byron, Bryant, Poe and Emerson gather dust on the shelves of the booksellers. Eventually they are relegated to the bargain counter, where they are picked up by some old-fashioned lover of poetry, for a song.

In the end, with all this staring him in the face—neglect, abuse and unremuneration for all his heart-burnings, strivings and pains-takings—is it a wonder that, in the sickened soul of the poet who has published one or two volumes of high-class verse, the question as to whether he shall continue to write or not resolves itself into the four simple words—What is the use?

New York Times, April 6, 1907: Lucas Malet's book for the future. An American poet tells why he esteems *The Far Horizon* above other recent works of fiction. Written for *The New York Times Saturday Review of Books* by Madison Cawein.

To the prolific reader of the modern novel, *The Far Horizon* must mark an epoch, both in point of distinction and of style. It is a rather curious and altogether agreeable pastime to compare the points of merit with the latest books of Mrs. Wharton and Fogazzaro, although Mrs. Wharton's slender little sheaf of a story, *Madame de Treymes*, hardly ranks as anything more than a delightfully subtle character sketch. But in Fogazzaro's *Saint*, we come somewhat

nearer to the abiding bulk of the conventional novel, even to the lengthy religious controversy which seems to subordinate the love theme almost to the finest point of perspective. Both these books are significant without doubt, and are among the few good novels of the present day. But one puts down a story like *The Far Horizon* with a rather different feeling. It is a book for the future, and will grow in appreciation and popularity. A certain subjectiveness of style distinguishes it, a sort of reminiscent touch, which by some conjurer's trick becomes the most objective thing in the world, and as a result the characters actually live and move and have a very real existence.

The Lady of the Windswept Dust is all the more real for her allegorical name, and her comings and goings outside the conventional law. Our hero is described as a middle-aged gentleman of moderate fortune, who happens through force of circumstances to be a "paying guest" at an eminently respectable lodging house in one of the unfashionable parts of London. Not alluring, surely; nothing brilliant to enhance the picture; only one of those remarkable things which, in this instance, done in gray, in almost neutral tints, yet has the effect of strong opalescent color. A story subdued almost to the point of sombreness, but with a certain Oriental richness of effect. For out of this oppresive background grow gradually upon the consciousness a being altogether lovely and noble, a person of grandly simple soul, committed to greatness, who moves among his fellow beings with a pathetic dignity and loftiness of outline. Always perfectly in their midst; one of them and yet not one of them. Surely Mrs. Harrison's [Mrs. Mary St. Leger Harrison] art can go no further in subtle character painting. While the book as a whole impresses one as sad, Dominic Iglesias himself is not sad at all, but moves in his daily life with a fine serenity, which somehow heightens the general effect of pathos without spoiling the splendid sanity and poise of his character. He suffers terribly, it is true, having periods of agony and self-abasement, which are inevitable where one either thinks or feels. Freedom, loneliness, and old age are his burdensome guests. But it is noticeable and significant that he advances out of these periods always a step further on his way, healing himself of his hurts, as all great natures do, and adjusting himself to the conditions of his life with a very spiritual fineness.

One of the most beautiful and convincing chapters in the book is the one where Dominic, sad and wasting away with illness, comes, by a natural and reasonable process of thought, to give himself back to the Mother Church. This part of the story has nothing of the character of a religious controversy, such as we feel in Fogazzaro's *Saint*, but is subordinated as a real and abiding part of a lonely man's life whose predilection for the Catholic Church was his, first of all, through the instinct of race, as he was by birth a Spaniard; and, secondly, by a very logical process of reasoning. Mrs. Harrison

has here as elsewhere shown herself a master of technique. Where she has used a religious or philosophical idea, and the book is full of them, she has been careful to put them into the story and not to build her story around an abstract idea.

First of all she is telling a story, and everything is fuel which is rightfully used to keep the story going. Such little passages as the following, "The pathos of life as the multitude lives it, stupidly, without ideas, without any conscious nobility of purpose, yet with a certain blundering and clumsy heroism," she puts into the thoughts of very real people, and it seems natural for them to be said. One likes the portrait of Sir Abel Barking, which is well drawn, as is the little group of people who live just within sight of Dominic's lonely window, and who play such an important little part in his life. George Lovegrove is wholesome and lovable. His humility and his thrusting himself aside, so that he might not be in his friend's way, have a rare pathos. In point of faithfulness he was undoubtedly first, and it seems but fitting in the final chapter that he and the nun and the Lady of the Windswept Dust should share in some wise the last vigil.

The story, although it never abandons the loud environments of London, repeatedly impresses you as being vividly and unquestionably idyllic. There is the idyllic scene—a twentieth century Watteau, as it were—of the meeting of Dominic Iglesais and Poppy St. John, the Lady of the Windswept Dust. And again that impressive picture of the lone cedar in Trimmer's Green, "with its leafless trees and iron railings, livid, a grayness upon them as of fear." A cedar, symbolic, in a melancholy way, of this sad and solitary soul, this isolated man, outside whose windows it stretched its gaunt and sombre branches, tortured and weeping with the winds and rains of Autumn. And, then, again, we have those happier touches, full of poetry, those harkings back to the little house in Holland Street, with its "bravely blossoming garden," a veritable oasis in the gray dust of Dominic's days, the one flowery spot in the desert of his years, fragrant, and hushed and holy, holding the imagination, as it held the memory, with an appealing, an irresistible insistence as a little child holds one's heart, with the gentle innocence of its eyes.

Not since I read the forty-first chapter of *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* has any chapter in a modern novel impressed me as did the closing one of *The Far Horizon*. Here, as does in his best work the great novelist, Meredith, Mrs. Harrison has achieved greatness. Fine and beautiful, it is also dramatic, in a quiet, unobtrusive way, and a fitting close, worthy of the notable whole. Leaving us, as it does, with an overwhelming sense of regret, we still feel that it has its *raison d'etre*, that thus it would have actually happened in real life; so in the ice in the smile of undeviating fate are we brought face to face with the irony of the actual. Our regret, however, is tempered with satisfaction at the close that the end was such—

fittingly such—that the life of this man, blameless and beautiful, and the life of this woman, weak and unfortunate, had been permitted at least to touch, though it was too late, to touch spiritually and no more, and through the purifying fire of that contact to rise above the body, the frailties of the flesh, the grosser physical passions.

Louisville Times, May 31, 1907: Our American Poets, by Madison Cawein.

That the average American reader is better informed on the subject of modern English poetry and poets than is the average English reader on the subject of American poets and poetry goes without saying. That almost all Englishmen read little or no American verse, good, bad or indifferent, is emphasized in my conviction by the question put by an intellectual British subject, the English Ambassador, James Bryce, at a banquet not so long ago, as to "Who are your poets?"

A number of New York editors, some of them more or less distinguished, have undertaken to enlighten the mind of this great public man as to who our poets really are, and in their strenuous efforts to do so have entirely lost sight of, overlooked, the two foremost poets in our country, Joaquin Miller and James Whitcomb Riley.

Miller, unquestionably, is a poet who has a right to take his place by the side of the best poets now writing in England, not excepting even Swinburne, and it merely argues their ignorance of literary matters for any well-read men or women, English or American, to confess to an unacquaintance with Joaquin Miller's works. It has not been so many decades ago since England, literary England, hailed and honored him as our foremost poet, and that during the lives of Lowell, Whittier and Whitman. The East, I am compelled to say, is prone to ignore, or putting it more courteously, lose sight of poets who do not reside and work within its immediate reach, within its own environment, the comfortable circumference of its vision; not too far from its great literary centers, Boston and New York. Had Miller resided in either of these cities he would have been certain of mention by many of, if not all, the enlightened editors there when interviewed as to "Who are your poets?"

Not since we had Walt Whitman with us have we produced an American poet more absolutely democratic and cosmopolitan than is Joaquin Miller, with all his faults and foibles of rhyme, rhythm and reason. What an array of entirely American poems, excellent in many ways—in spite of his many mannerisms—but frequently rising to heights of sublimity, can we point to with pride as his contribution to American song. To mention a few, I shall name only "The Arizonian," "The Ship in the Desert," "With Walker in Nicaragua," "Sappho

and Phaon," a thoroughly American poem, in spite of its title; and, last, his just published poem on Alaska, entitled, "Light," which an Eastern poet has described to me as being one of the most wonderfully beautiful poems she had ever read.

James Whitcomb Riley, also has his credentials from England as well as America. He is a poet, though, of the people and for the people. Simple, sweet and direct, and true as true gold. We speak of him affectionately as "our Burns," our American Burns, and Burns never wrote any lovelier songs than some that Riley has written; and for originality of phrasing and in versatility of characterization, Riley has even surpassed Burns at many times. His work never smells of the lamp, as the work of most of our younger poets, English and American, does. No academic groves for him to wander in. He has relegated the classics to the place they belong, the dry-as-dust back shelves of old Dr. Teufelsdreck, where they may lie, for all he cares, to gather grime and dust and worms from everlasting unto everlasting. To the credit of Riley, also, must go the making of one most imaginative piece of blank verse, a fantastical play, entitled, "The Flying Islands of the Night," which Thomas Bailey Aldrich once mentioned to me as being worthy of a place by the side of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream."

These are the poets whom I would point out to Mr. Bryce as being most worthy of his consideration and perusal, Joaquin Miller and James Whitcomb Riley, whom the people of this country long ago laureled as our foremost poets, if not our greatest; and not, as the editors of the East did, in answer to the English Ambassador's question, those three or four poets of the younger generation, academic and transcendental, whose reputations are just now in the making, and not yet made.

Note by the editor [of *The Louisville Times*]: Mr. Cawein modestly refrains any inclusion of his own name and the title in the foregoing article, but here is what *The Kentucky Post*, printed at Covington, and referring to him as "Kentucky's Poet Laureate," discriminately and truly says of our distinguished singer:

"What of the poet who has celebrated in melodious verse her hills and dales, her fauna and flora, doing it in such manner as to call forth the enthusiastic praise of some of the best living critics? Kentucky might say to the Ambassador: Please take the trouble to read the introduction to an English edition of Cawein's poems, an introduction and appreciation by Edmund Gosse, one of the first of living British critics. In that you will find it set forth that Cawein is a solitary hermit thrush of song, with a note, a melody, a beauty all his own."

And, indeed, Gosse's praise is not exaggerated. Cawein has written many volumes of poems, varying in degree, kind and excel-

lence. His most discriminating and truest friends have often told him that he has published too much; that he has not weeded out enough. And yet, when all is said and done, Cawein has already written a body of verse which more than challenges comparison with the poems of William Vaughan Moody and G. E. Woodberry, who were some time ago declared the greatest living American poets.

For variety of rhythm and rhyme, for daring of metrical experiment, for range of theme, neither Woodberry nor Moody can compare with Cawein. Sonnets and lyrics, dramatic sketches and blank verse have come from his versatile lyre. He has written ballads dealing with old legends and poems dealing with Oriental themes. But the work by which he will live is that exquisite poesy in which he depicts the glamour of the Kentucky forests and streams and preserves for us something of that nature beauty which must inevitably vanish when Kentucky becomes the hive of industry and commerce for which its destiny marks it.

Louisville Times, NOVEMBER 26, 1909: NEWS ABOUT BOOKS. MADISON CAWEIN ON *The Dragnet*, BY EVELYN SNEAD BARNETT.

In a recent number of a New England periodical that important modern creation, the novel, and more especially the novel viewed as a best seller, is analysed and defined at length. It is a very just and common-sense estimate of the commercial and literary values of the novel, by a well-known writer of the Middle West, who himself, as he confesses, has been the victim and the writer of several best sellers.

His article is a very amusing and significant rebuke of the popular, exalted, literary notion that a novel is necessarily short-lived and trivial, because it happens to have caught the public taste, the latter commodity having been from time immemorial the *bete noir* of the academic school. And he points out that some of the best modern fiction, notably the books of Mrs. Wharton, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mr. Churchill and Mr. William De Morgan, have been frequently seen in the book stalls, conspicuous among the best sellers.

It is clear, therefore, that the best modern English and American fiction has two distinct ideals to follow, and which will be followed with more or less faithfulness according to the particular bias of the individual writer. One, for the thread of the story, which of necessity must have body enough to sustain interest to the end of the chapter; and the other, and more important, perhaps, for that mysterious and flowing and evanescent quality called style, in which the story is clothed, and which is properly the keynote of the whole, and which same mysterious and ineffable garment is the last test of art, and its finest florescence. So that Mr. Stevenson believes that a writer, having caught this important trick, may deal in what subject-matter he pleases and have no difficulty in holding his audience.

Published Comments by Cawein

In Mrs. Evelyn Snead Barnett's new book, just published under the title of *The Dragnet*, and which is her first long novel, the reader finds the same delightful charm of simplicity in style that distinguishes her earlier work, and added to this a very absorbing story of contemporary American life.

Mrs. Barnett is a Kentuckian by birth, and has been a well-known writer, for several years, of shorter magazine stories and the editor of the literary page of *The Courier-Journal*, the paper which Mr. Watterson's editorials have made so famous and so widely read.

The Dragnet is a story, not only of the dealings of that octopus of America, the Trust, and its gradual crushing out of the lives of the smaller manufactories engaged in the same business, but it is also a story with a mystery, so enthralling that it makes it almost impossible for the reader to lay down the book after he is well into the swing of the narrative. When you have declared to yourself, "This is the climax; invention can go no further; the mystery must be cleared up here," suddenly a new and unexpected vista, in a totally different direction, is opened up, and you are borne along on a more intricate path toward new discoveries. *The Dragnet* is typically American in its setting and in the virile and sometimes grewsome episodes that go to make the story, and which no other civilization but our own could furnish with such rich crudeness and reality of detail. The Trust is the great American problem. Our greatest men have been absorbed in its maelstrom; their energy and genius have gone to its making, and their lives have been made inseparable from its history. The masses of our poor have fed its insatiable and inexorable demands, so that the Trust in a measure is a faithful and short chronicle of the American people. And, whether one's larger sympathies are with or against it, one must realize the faithfulness with which Mrs. Barnett has depicted some of its gloomier and uglier aspects. She has shown, with clear and happy art, how it can affect the home and the individual life which it touches. The central theme, however, menacing though it be, and gloomy at times, does not exclude a delightful and touching picture of character and manners, in some of the best types of American domestic life. Her feminine characters, Constance and Diana, although not essentially Southern, have an atmosphere delicate and aromatic, suggestive of the old aristocratic Southern life, with its pathetic and noble clinging to traditions and its faithful love of the old homesteads of the happy long ago. The writer touches the innermost thoughts and feelings of the feminine heart with fidelity to life.

But it remains to Mr. Blount and the happy, irrepressible Blinky to unravel the mystery which furnishes the absorbing and the vital interest of the book. And it is given into capable hands. They are, both man and boy, real people, and Mrs. Barnett has never had a happier inspiration in character drawing. Blinky does not take to education because he was born to be an unraveler of the deeds of men

and not to unravel the dull threads of musty books. We follow both of them, Mr. Blount and Blinky, with sympathetic interest through the law courts and the long, tedious routine of justice, and into business offices and out into the green fields and open hedges, where nature covers up her wounds and the wounds of her children with the gradual and healing art of time, and we always find them good, wholesome company. Mrs. Barnett has invested them with the loving touches of a common humanity, and when the story closes we part company with these two sincere, unselfish-conscious people with genuine regret. Indeed, Mrs. Barnett has written a most engaging book, and we are glad to welcome her into the ranks of the writers of real fiction, wholesome and inspiring. To the student and the lover of the great out-of-doors Mrs. Barnett's book cannot fail to make its intimate appeal, because of her admirable fidelity to the moods of nature, the constant and moving rapture of the woods and fields, the lonely terror of the ravine by night and the early ride by morning. All of these nature settings charm us by their freshness and spontaneity, and we turn to the inscription on the first page of the book with the conviction that the writer has gotten her information at first hand.

New York Times, JULY 5, 1914: WELL-KNOWN POETS SELECT THE BEST POEM AND TELL WHY. CAWEIN IS PATRIOTIC. MADISON CAWEIN ADDS TO HIS OTHER VIRTUES THAT OF PATRIOTISM. THE MAN WHO OF ALL AMERICAN POETS IS MOST INTIMATE WITH NATURE, WRITES:

Pendennis Club, Louisville, Kentucky.

To the Editor of *The New York Times:* You put a very difficult question to me—to name without any preparation what short poem in the English language I consider the best. Into my mind there at once flashed, on my reading this opening question of your letter, one of Poe's poems—Edgar Allen Poe's "To One in Paradise," whose lyric quality has never, in my opinion, been surpassed by any poet in England or America. Poe wrote several immortal poems, of which this is, for music and thought, the supreme lyric. Madison Cawein.

The Writer's Bulletin, NEW YORK, JULY-AUGUST, 1914: THE FUTURE OF POETRY, BY MADISON CAWEIN.

The future of poetry, for a time, seemed to be toward the poetic drama; and many poets and critics, good, bad and indifferent, both in England and America, believed, and still pretend to believe, that that will be the poetic expression of the future. I, however, differ

with them as to this. They, it is true, have a large array of recent creditable poetry, in drama form, on their side of the argument to point to as convincing. Yeats in Ireland; Phillips in England; Hauptmann in Germany; Rostand in France and D'Annunzio in Italy. While in America, from a wilderness of dramatists who have written excellent poetic drama, I select the name of Percy Mackaye, who has written several successful dramas in poetic form, all vibrant with the real gold of poetry, and several of which have been produced upon the stage.

In spite of this formidable array of names on the side of poetic drama, it is my opinion that the future of poetry lies not in this mode of expression but in an entirely different field; the short idyll, the briefer the better; the descriptive and dramatic lyric; and the narrative poem, so popular the first half of the nineteenth century.

The output of the press, both in prose and poetry, is so large that even a constant and consistent reader is hardly able to skim the surface of all the good prose and poetry published, much less plumb and explore their ever-increasing depths. What is the outlook for the years, the centuries to come? Who then will take the trouble to read, except perfunctorily, partly or in their entirety, the innumerable good dramas of poetry written and published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries? Who even now reads them? Very few; and mainly those who are more or less interested in poetry, but never the great outside public that reads its Longfellow and James Whitcomb Riley.

Good poetry will always find readers, however few, I am ready to state, be it either in the dramatic or the lyrical form; be it in complete editions or mere anthologies. The chances for immortality on the part of the writers of the lyric and the drama are equally divided, and their fame will persist in proportion to the amount of the work they leave and its excellence. But the writer of a single poem, one little lyric, or ballad, has as great a chance for immortality as the author of the greatest poetic drama or the longest narrative poem, and his fame will endure, in accordance with the excellence of his work, in a proportionate degree, with theirs; but it will endure.

The world will not easily forget such poems as "The Man With a Hoe," or "The Recessional." They have greater chances of surviving the neglect of the ages to come than has all the poetic drama that is now being written. And this from the very fact that they are brief, and at the same time vital and excellent poetry, and so qualified for selection and inclusion in any and every anthology of the present or future time. For it will have to come to that eventually. And what are the writers of longer poems and the poetic drama to be represented by? Excerpts from their works; passages, or some unpretentious lyric, or lyrical expression, that leaves the reader unsatisfied and unconvinced.

Even Stephen Phillips, whom I place at the head of the writers of poetic drama in the English-speaking world, at the present time, I venture to predict will be presented to the generations to come, not by his exquisite "Paola and Francesca" or "Herod," but by his two short blank verse poems, "Marpessa," and "Christ in Hades," which he has never surpassed.

It is only the very great, the supreme genius, who has survived in poetic drama. A slight lyric has more chance, in my belief, of being remembered and read in the future than has any *one* long poem or play of the present day. Shakespeare and Goethe have made it almost impossible for the generations that have succeeded and will succeed them to achieve anything approaching their greatness in their particular field. They are universal; they have set the standard of the poetic play so high, that I fear, no one in the future, as hitherto in the past, will ever be able to attain to it, much less to surpass.

Like Dodsley's *Old Plays* most of the poetic dramas of the present will eventually be relegated to the remotest shelves of the library of the future, there to collect dust of neglect and oblivion, as so many of their predecessors have; while a lyric, selected here and there from the great mass of contemporary verse, and occasionally from, perhaps, one of these bulky dramas themselves, and included in future anthologies, will be all that will survive to represent the present output of poetry to the generations that follow.

The Writer's Bulletin, New York, February, 1915: The World's Real Wealth, By Madison Cawein.

Editor's Note: The following brief article was contributed to *The Writer's Bulletin* shortly before the death of Madison Cawein, whose passing we told of in the last issue of our journal:

The only real wealth of the world is its dreams. These, and not our material possessions, make for the greatness of a nation. We live in a commercial age. Ours is a material nation that reckons as achievements its wonderful progress in material things, inventions, manufactories, railroads, ocean liners, tunnels, tubes and bridges. These are the things on which we base our pre-eminence. The spiritual, the intellectual, must accept second place. And yet the latter only are the things that endure, that make a nation really great. Through them Greece and Rome have survived, are still living. Through them shall England and Germany and France live when, like Nineveh and Tyre, their material magnificence is swept away, their edifices one with the sands of the desert.

We, in this country, are too hurried to devote much time to the dreamer, to encourage him with a word of cheer to go on. It is not

as it is in the older countries. Congress and the Senate offer him no reward, no recognition. He must go his way alone, patiently, poorly, if necessary, starving; but he must go it alone, without any hope of National recompense or recognition, keeping his fire alive with the praise of the very few who believe in him and his ideals.

There is no place in the work-a-day world for the dreamer. And yet it is the dreams that count in the end, that eventually make one nation envied of all other nations, setting her pre-eminently higher than the others. These are the things that count for more than gold, the things that last, that persist beyond the permanence of the steel structure, the railroad, the crop report, the trust and the tariff. Many have elected to be of this brotherhood; many have failed to perpetuate their dreams. No matter; if one of many shall at last be chosen, that one shall add more to the wealth of his country than can all the gold of Alaska and California.

The dreams which any true poet presents to the world may not be of that imperishable stuff that makes for immortality, but they help humanity for the time being, and that is sufficient, is all he hoped for them; dreams of a beauty that has never died, and that will never utterly perish from the earth, as long as the aesthetic sense is a part of the spiritual nature of man.

XI

ESTIMATES OF CAWEIN'S POETRY

By Five of His Contemporaries

Edmund Gosse, Introduction to *Kentucky Poems*, 1902.
William Dean Howells, *North American Review*, 1908.
H. Houston Peckham, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 1915.
Anna Blanche McGill, *The Sewanee Review*, 1915.
Henry Adams Bellows, *The Bellman*, August 12, 1916.

Introduction to *Kentucky Poems*, 1902. Reprinted as Introduction to *The Poems of Madison Cawein*, 1907.

AN INTRODUCTION

By Edmund Gosse

[English Literary Critic and Poet]

Since the disappearance of the latest survivors of that graceful and somewhat academic school of poets who ruled American literature so long from the shores of Massachusetts, serious poetry in the United States seems to have been passing through a crisis of languor. Perhaps there is no country on the civilized globe where, in theory, verse is treated with more respect and, in practice, with a greater lack of grave consideration than America. No conjecture as to the reason of this must be attempted here, further than to suggest that the extreme value set upon sharpness, ingenuity and rapid mobility is obviously calculated to depreciate and to condemn the quiet practice of the most meditative of the arts. Hence we find that it is what is called "humorous" verse which is mainly in fashion on the western side of the Atlantic. Those rhymes are most warmly

welcomed which play the most preposterous tricks with language, which dazzle by the most mountebank swiftness of turn, and which depend most for their effect upon paradox and the negation of sober thought. It is probable that the diseased craving for what is "smart," "snappy" and wide-awake, and the impulse to see everything foreshortened and topsy-turvy, must wear themselves out before cooler and more graceful tastes again prevail in imaginative literature.

Whatever be the cause, it is certain that this is not a moment when serious poetry, of any species, is flourishing in the United States. The absence of anything like a common impulse among young writers, of any definite and intelligible, if excessive, *parti pris*, is immediately observable if we contrast the American, for instance, with the French poets of the last fifteen years. Where there is no school and no clear trend of executive ambition, the solitary artist, whose talent forces itself up into the light and air, suffers unusual difficulties, and runs a constant danger of being choked in the aimless mediocrity that surrounds him. We occasionally meet with a poet in the history of literature, of whom we are inclined to say, charming as he is, he would have developed his talent more evenly and conspicuously—with greater decorum, perhaps—if he had been accompanied from the first by other young men like-minded, who would have formed for him an atmosphere and cleared for him a space. This is the one regret I feel in contemplating, as I have done for years past, the ardent and beautiful talent of Mr. Cawein. I deplore the fact that he seems to stand alone in his generation; I think his poetry would even have been better than it is, and its qualities would certainly have been more clearly perceived, and more intelligently appreciated, if he were less isolated. In his own country, at this particular moment, in this matter of serious nature-painting in lyric verse, Mr. Cawein possesses what Cowley would have called "a monopoly of wit." In one of his lyrics [in "Intimations of the Beautiful"], Mr. Cawein asks:

> The song-birds, are they flown away,
> The song-birds of the summer-time,
> That sang their souls into the day,
> And set the laughing hours to rhyme?
> No cat-bird scatters through the hush
> The sparkling crystals of her song;
> Within the woods no hermit-thrush
> Trails an enchanted flute along.

To this inquiry, the answer is: The only hermit-thrush now audible seems to sing from Louisville, Kentucky. America will, we may be perfectly sure, calm herself into harmony again, and possess once more her school of singers. In those coming days, history may

perceive in Mr. Cawein the golden link that bound the music of the past to the music of the future through an interval of comparative tunelessness.

The career of Mr. Madison Cawein is represented to me as being most uneventful. He seems to have enjoyed unusual advantages for the cultivation and protection of the poetical temperament. He was born on the twenty-third of March, 1865, in the metropolis of Kentucky, the vigorous city of Louisville, on the southern side of the Ohio, in the midst of a country celebrated for tobacco and whisky and Indian corn. These are commodities which may be consumed in excess, but in moderation they make glad the heart of man. They represent a certain glow of the earth, they indicate the action of a serene and gentle climate upon a rich soil. It was in this delicate and voluptuous State of Kentucky that Mr. Cawein was born, that he was educated, that he became a poet, and that he has lived ever since. His blood is full of the colour and odour of his native landscape. The solemn books of history tell us that Kentucky was discovered in 1769, by Daniel Boone, a hunter. But he first discovers a country who sees it first, and teaches the world to see it; no doubt some day the city of Louisville will erect in one of its principal squares, a statue to "Madison Cawein, who discovered the Beauty of Kentucky." The genius of this poet is like one of those deep rivers of his native state, which cut paths through the forests of chestnut and hemlock as they hurry toward the south and west, brushing with the impulsive fringe of their currents the rhododendrons and calmias and azaleas that bend from the banks to be mirrored in their flushing waters.

Mr. Cawein's vocation to poetry was irresistible. I do not know that he ever tried to resist it. I have even the idea that a little more resistance would have been salutary for a talent which nothing could have discouraged, and which opposition might have taught the arts of compression and selection. Mr. Cawein suffered at first, I think, from lack of criticism more than from lack of eulogy. From his earliest writings I seem to gather an impression of a Louisville more ready to praise what was second-rate than what was first-rate, and practically, indeed, without any scale of appreciation whatever. This may be a mistake of mine; at all events, Mr. Cawein has had more to gain from the passage of years in self-criticism than in inspiring enthusiasm. The fount was in him from the first; but it bubbled forth before he had digged a definite channel for it. Sometimes, to this very day, he sports with the principles of syntax as Nature played games so long ago with the fantastic caverns of the valley of the Green River or with the coral reefs of his own Ohio. He has bad rhymes, amazing in so delicate an ear; he has awkwardness of phrase not expected in one so plunged in contemplation of the eternal harmony of Nature. But these grow fewer and less obtrusive as the years pass by.

The virgin timber-forests of Kentucky, the woods of honey-locust and buckeye, of white oak and yellow poplar, with their clearings full of flowers unknown to us by sight or name, from which in the distance are visible the domes of the far-away Cumberland Mountains, this seems to be the hunting field of Mr. Cawein's imagination. Here all, it must be confessed, has hitherto been unfamiliar to the Muses. If Persephone "of our Cumnor cowslips never heard," how much less can her attention have been arrested by clusters of orchids from the Ocklawaha, or by the song of the whippoorwill, rung out when "the west was hot geranium-red" under the boughs of a black-jack on the slopes of Mount Kinnex. "Not here," one is inclined to exclaim, "not here, O Apollo, are haunts meet for thee," but the art of the poet is displayed by his skill in breaking down these prejudices of time and place. Mr. Cawein reconciles us to his strange landscape—the strangeness of which one has to admit is mainly one of nomenclature, by the exercise of a delightful instinctive pantheism. He brings the ancient gods to Kentucky, and it is marvelous how quickly they learn to be at home there. Here is Bacchus, with a spicy fragment of calamus-root in his hand, trampling down the blue-eyed grass, and skipping, with the air of a hunter born, into the hickory thicket, to escape Artemis, whose robes, as she passes swiftly with her dogs through the woods, startle the humming-birds, silence the green tree-frogs, and fill the hot still air with the perfumes of peppermint and penny-royal. It is a queer landscape, but one of new natural beauties frankly and sympathetically discovered, and it forms a *mise en scene* which, I make bold to say, would have scandalized neither Keats nor Spenser.

It was Mr. Howells, ever as generous in discovering new native talent as he is unflinching in reproof of the effeteness of European taste—who first drew attention to the originality and beauty of Mr. Cawein's poetry. The Kentucky poet had, at that time, published but one tentative volume, the *Blooms of the Berry*, in 1887. This was followed, in 1888, by *The Triumph of Music*, and since then hardly a year has passed without a slender sheaf of verse from Mr. Cawein's garden. Among these (if a single volume is to be indicated), the quality which distinguishes him from all other poets, the Kentucky flavor, if we may call it so, is perhaps to be most agreeably detected in *Intimations of the Beautiful.* But it is time that I should leave the American lyrist to make his own appeal to English ears, with but one additional word of explanation, namely, that in this selection Mr. Cawein's narrative poems on mediaeval themes, and in general his cosmopolitan writings, have been neglected in favor of such lyrics as would present him most vividly in his own native landscape, no visitor in spirit to Europe, but at home in that bright and exuberant West [from "Intimations of the Beautiful"]—

Where, in the hazy morning, runs
The stony branch that pools and drips,
Where red-haws and the wild-rose hips
Are strewn like pebbles; where the sun's
Own gold seems captured by the weeds;
To see, through scintillating seeds,
The hunters steal with glimmering guns.
To stand within the dewy ring
Where pale death smites the bone-set blooms,
And everlasting's flowers and plumes
Of mint, with aromatic wing!
And hear the creek—whose sobbing seems
A wild man murmuring in his dreams—
And insect violins that sing.

So sweet a voice, so consonant with the music of the singers of past times, heard in a place so fresh and strange, will surely not pass without its welcome from the lovers of genuine poetry.

—*Edmund Gosse.*

North American Review, JANUARY, 1908. REPRINTED AS THE FOREWORD IN *Poems by Madison Cawein*, 1911:

THE POETRY OF MR. MADISON CAWEIN

BY WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

[DEAN OF AMERICAN LETTERS.]

When a poet begins writing, and we begin liking his work, we own willingly enough that we have not, and cannot have, got the compass of his talent. We must wait till he has written more, and we have learned to like him more, and even then we should hesitate his definition from all that he has done, if we did not very commonly qualify ourselves from the latest thing he had done. Between the earliest thing and the latest thing there may have been a hundred different things, and in his swan-long life of a singer there would probably be a hundred yet, and all different. But we take the latest as if it summed him up in motive and range and tendency. Many parts of his work offer themselves in confirmation of our judgment, while those which might impeach it shrink away and hide themselves, and leave us to our precipitation, our catastrophe.

It was surely nothing less than by a catastrophe that I should have been so betrayed in the volumes of Mr. Cawein's verse which reached me last before the volume of his collected poems. I had read his poetry and loved it from the beginning, and in each successive expression of

it, I had delighted in its expanding and maturing beauty. I believe I had not failed to own its compass, and when "He touched the tender spots of various quills," I had responded to every note of the changing music. I did not always respond audibly either in public or in private, for it seemed to me that so old a friend might fairly rest on the laurels he had helped bestow. But when that last volume came, I said to myself, "This applausive silence has gone on long enough. It is time to break it with open appreciation. Still," I said "I must guard against too great appreciation; I must mix in a little depreciation, to show that I have read attentively, critically, authoritatively." So I applied myself to the cheapest and easiest means of depreciation, and asked, "Why do you always write Nature poems? Why not Human Nature poems?" or the like. But in seizing upon an objection so obvious that I ought to have known it was superficial, I had wronged a poet, who had never done me harm, but only good, in the very terms and conditions of his being a poet. I had not stayed to see that his nature poetry was instinct with human poetry, with his human poetry, with mine, with yours. I had made his reproach what ought to have been his finest praise, what is always the praise of poetry when it is not artificial and formal. I ought to have said, as I had seen, that not one of his lovely landscapes in which I could discover no human figure, but thrilled with a human presence penetrating to it from his most sensitive and subtle spirit until it was all but painfully alive with memories, with regrets, with longings, with hopes, with all that from time to time mutably constitutes us men and women. and yet keeps us children. He has the gift, in a measure that I do not think surpassed in any poet, of touching some smallest or commonest thing in nature and making it live from the manifold associations in which we have our being, and glow thereafter with an inextinguishable beauty. His felicities do not seem sought; rather they seem to seek him, and to surprise him with the delight they impart through him. He has the inspiration of the right word, and the courage of it, so that though in the first instant you may be challenged, you may be revolted, by something that you might have thought uncouth, you are presently overcome by the happy bravery of it, and gladly recognize that no other word of those verbal saints or aristocrats, dedicated to the worship or service of beauty, would at all so well have conveyed the sense of it as this or that plebeian.

If I began indulging myself in the pleasure of quotation, or the delight of giving proofs of what I say, I should soon and far transcend the modest bounds which the editor has set my paper. But the reader may take it from me that no other poet, not even of the great Elizabethan range, can outword this poet when it comes to choosing some epithet fresh from the earth or air, and with the morning sun or light upon it, for an emotion or experience in which the race renews its youth from generation to generation. He is of the kind of Keats and

Shelley and Wordsworth and Coleridge, in that truth to observance and experience of nature and the joyous expression of it, which are the dominant characteristics of his art. It is imaginable that the thinness of the social world in the Middle West threw the poet upon the communion with the fields and woods, the days and nights, the changing seasons, in which another great nature poet of ours declares they "speak in various language." But nothing could be farther from the didactic mood in which "communion with the various forms" of nature casts the Puritanic soul of Bryant, than the mood in which this German-blooded, Kentucky-born poet, who keeps throughout his song the sense of a perpetual and inalienable youth, with a spirit as pagan as that which breathes from Greek sculpture—but happily not more pagan. Most modern poets who are antique are rather over-Hellenic, in their wish not to be English or French, but there is nothing voluntary in Mr. Cawein's naturalization in the older world of myth and fable; he is too sincerely and solely a poet to be a *poseur;* he has his eyes everywhere except on the spectator, and his affair is to report the beauty that he sees, as if there were no one by to hear.

An interesting and charming trait of his poetry is its constant theme of youth and its limit within the range that the emotions and aspirations of youth take. He might indeed be called the poet of youth if he resented being called the poet of nature; but the poet of youth, be it understood, of vague regrets, of "tears, idle tears," of "long, long thoughts," for that is the real youth, and not the youth of the supposed hilarity, the attributive recklessness, the daring hopes. Perhaps there is some such youth as this, but it has not its home in the breast of any young poet, and he rarely utters it; at best he is of a light melancholy, a smiling wistfulness, and upon the whole, October is more to his mind than May.

In Mr. Cawein's work, therefore, what is not the expression of the world we vainly and rashly call the inanimate world, is the hardly more dramatized, and not more enchantingly imagined story of lovers, rather unhappy lovers. He finds his own in this sort far and near; in classic Greece, in heroic England, in romantic Germany, where the blue-flower blows, but not less in beautiful and familiar Kentucky, where the blue-grass shows itself equally the emblem of poetry, and the mouldering log in the cabin wall or the woodland path is of the same poetic value as the marble of the ruined temple or the stone of the crumbling castle. His singularly creative fancy breathes a soul into every scene; his touch leaves everything that was dull to the sense before glowing in the light of joyful recognition. He classifies his poems by different names, and they are of different themes, but they are after all of that unity which I have been trying, all too shirkingly, to suggest. One, for instance, is the pathetic story which tells itself in the lyrical eclogue, "One Day and Another". It is the conversation, prolonged from meeting to meeting between

two lovers whom death parts; but who recurrently find themselves and each other in the gardens and the woods, and on the waters which they tell each other of and together delight in. The effect is that which is truest to youth and love, for these transmutations of emotion form the disguise of self which makes passion tolerable; but mechanically the result is a series of nature-poems. More genuinely dramatic are such pieces as the "The Feud," "Ku-klux," and "The Lynchers," three out of many; but one which I value more because it is worthy of Wordsworth, or of Tennyson in a Wordsworthian mood, is "The Old Mill," ["The Old Water-Mill"] where, with all the wonted charm of his landscape art, Mr. Cawein gives us a strongly local and novel piece of character painting.

I deny myself with increasing reluctance the pleasure of quoting the stanzas, the verses, the phrases, the epithets which lure me by scores and hundreds in his poems. It must suffice me to say that I do not know any poem of his which has not some such a felicity; I do not know any poem of his which is not worth reading, at least the first time, and often the second and the third time, and so on as often as you have the chance of recurring to it. Some disappoint and others delight more than others; but there is none but in greater or less measure has the witchery native to the poet, and his place and his period.

It is only in order of his later time that I would put Mr. Cawein first among those Mid-Western poets, of whom he is the youngest. Poetry in the Middle West has had its development in which it was eclipsed by the splendor, transitory if not vain, of the California school. But it is deeply rooted in the life of the region, and is as true to its origins as any faithful portraiture of the Mid-Western landscape could be; you could not mistake the source of the poem or the picture. In a certain tenderness of light and coloring, the poems would recall the mellowed masterpieces of the older literatures rather than those of the New England school, where conscience dwells almost rebukingly with beauty. Perhaps if I name Mr. Cawein with Mr. James Whitcomb Riley, and with both those poets as true and fine, Mr. J. J. Piatt and Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt, I shall be making my meaning clearer. No doubt, there are others who will not at the moment name themselves to me, but keep themselves for the reader's less hurried recollection, and with whom he will like to group these. If the Middle West had produced no poets but these, she would have uttered herself in poetry in a voice not mistakable for any other. Each of them is an artist, and with their native quality in common, each has a peculiar charm. It is enough to say that Mr. Cawein's poetry has a beauty which is enchantingly its own, and with a family favor recognizable in the work of the others, is otherwise akin to that only as it is akin to what is beautiful in all poetry.—*W. D. Howells.*

Madison Cawein

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MADISON CAWEIN

BY H. HOUSTON PECKHAM

[INSTRUCTOR IN ENGLISH IN PURDUE UNIVERSITY.]

The old adage about the prophet without honor in his own country seldom applies in the South. In general, that section of our country acclaims her literary men, as well as her other celebrities, with peculiar loyalty, peculiar pride. It was scarcely three years ago, if memory errs not, that Southern critics from Baltimore to El Paso, from Dallas to Jacksonville, were chiding Professor Brander Matthews for his shameful damning-with-faint-praise of writers born south of Mason and Dixon's Line. Yet I am persuaded that the South does not begin to appreciate one of her most gifted sons, the foremost American poet of our generation, the lamented Madison Cawein.

An estimate of a recently deceased author should, I suppose, have a great deal to say about that author's personality. Unfortunately, however, I do not feel qualified to offer much testimony regarding the personality of Cawein. For a brief time several years ago I had some correspondence with him, and on one happy occasion I had the pleasure and honor of conversing with him; but Cawein reminiscences I must leave to those who knew the beloved Kentucky singer well. One thing I will venture, though; and that is that even slight acquaintance with him revealed his proverbial modesty. Cawein was an unassuming man, and thereby hangs more than one interesting tale. One of the most charming of these little incidents is related by a close lifelong friend of the poet's. Cawein sadly underrated some of his best work, and on one occasion he was about to destroy a particularly fine lyric. The lyric was rescued in the nick of time and published without the author's knowledge; and so completely had Cawein allowed the piece to pass from his mind that when he saw it in print he did not recognize it as the child of his own fancy.

But though Madison Cawein depreciated some of his best poems, he seldom made the mistake, all too common among poets, of considering his bad verse good. True, he was prone to overestimate his epic powers—he looked upon his ponderous, tedious "Accolon of Gaul" as one of his supreme masterpieces; but, all in all, he had exceedingly good knowledge of his limitations. To appreciate this fact, one has but to note the uniform technical excellence of Cawein's work.

Much has been written about Madison Cawein—so much, indeed, that one who attempts to add a few words must guard against the danger of wearying the reader with threadbare truisms. Cawein's

amazing fecundity, his irresistible tunefulness, his broad range, his ardently romantic imagination, his human sympathies, his dramatic powers, his intense love for his craft, and his tremendous influence upon the lesser poets of his day—these are facts of such ancient repute that we must not tarry with them here.

A thing not nearly so well known about Cawein is that he was an adept in handling the sort of humorous dialect verse that we associate most closely with the name of James Whitcomb Riley. Cawein seldom wrote in this vein; but when he did, it was with the touch of a master. A few stanzas of "Corncob Jones, An Oldham-County Weather Philosopher" in *The Republic* will prove this:

"Who is Corncob Jones?" you say.
  Beatingest man and talkingest:
Talk and talk th' enduring day,
  Never even stop to rest,
Keep on talking that a-way,
  Talk you dead, or do his best.

We were there in that old barn,
  Loafing round and swapping lies:
There was Wiseheart, talking corn,
  Me and Raider boosting ryes,
When old Corncob sprung a yarn
  Just to give us a surprise.

"Why, as I have said tofore,"
  (Here he aimed a streak of brown
At a hornet on the floor,
  Got him too) "you put hit down
To experience, nothing more,—
  Whut they call hit there in town.

"Natur' jest rubs in the thing—
  Jest won't let a man ferget:
Keeps hit up spring arter spring—
  Why?—Jest 'cause now you kin bet,
Blamed blackberries bloom, by Jing!
  They jest need the cold and wet."

Let me return, however, to more salient points. Let me dwell, at more length, upon two items which are perhaps quite as obvious, quite as widely recognized, as any which I have mentioned. One reason, in my opinion, why Cawein is bound to go down in literary history as one of our most considerable American bards is that he had profound and wholesome respect for the standard poetic forms. Long after erudite students shall have ceased to worry their brains

about the conceits of Donne and Herbert and Crashaw; long after most of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" have grown sear and have returned unto dust; long, long after men have forgotten that some flowing-haired, horn-spectacled critic once pronounced Ezra Pound wonderful, or that Ezra Pound ever lived and moved and had his being, a grateful public will rejoice that Madison Cawein sat at the feet of Milton the stately, and Keats the lovely, and hearkened not to the clanging cymbals of some freakish innovator, some stridently clamourous mountebank outside the gates of the sacred temple of Poesy. Cawein carved not with fragile implements. The ancient and honorable sonnet and the everlasting iambus were among his chief working-tools. And why should it not be so? Why, in the name of Common Sense, should a poet seek for new mediums of expression when with the old he could sing so beautifully as thus? ["March"]:

This is the tomboy month of all the year,
  March, who comes shouting o'er the winter hills,
  Waking the world with laughter, as she wills,
Or wild halloos a windflower in her ear.
She stops a moment by the half-thawed mere
  And whistles to the wind, and straightway shrills
  The hyla's song, and hoods of daffodils
Crowd golden 'round her, leaning their heads to hear.
Then through the woods, that drip with all their eaves,
  Her mad hair blown about her, loud she goes
    Singing and calling to the naked trees;
And straight the oilets of the little leaves
  Open their eyes in wonder, rows on rows,
    And the first bluebird bugles to the breeze.

Or thus [from "Dream Road"]:

I took the road again last night
On which my boyhood's hills look down;
The old road leading from the town,
The village there below the height,
Its cottage homes, all huddled brown,
Each with its blur of light.

The old road, full of ruts, that leads,
A winding streak of limestone-grey,
Over the hills and far away;
That's crowded here by arms of weeds
And elbows of rail-fence, asway
With flowers that no one heeds.

The cricket and the katydid
Pierced silence with their stinging sounds;
The firefly went its golden rounds,
Where, lifting slow one sleepy lid,
The baby rosebud dreamed; and mounds
Of lilies breathed half-hid.

The white moon waded through a cloud,
Like some pale woman through a pool;
And in the darkness, close and cool
I felt a form against me bowed,
Her breast to mine; and deep and full
Her maiden heart beat loud.

But the most important fact about Cawein is, I think, that he was a great nature poet, the greatest that his country has yet produced. When we mention the poetry of Bryant and Emerson, our first thought is of nature; yet how slight, how general is most of their nature poetry compared with Cawein's! And what other American nature poet dare we mention in the same breath with Cawein? Every season of the year, every mood of earth and sky, well-nigh every bird and flower and weed of his native Kentucky was so beautiful to him as to be celebrated in song. No one denies Cawein's love for the little things of nature, his marvelously close observation, his minute accuracy of description. Indeed some have charged that he peered too closely, that he crowded his canvas too full of rank undergrowth, that he made his picture as bewilderingly prolix and as wearisomely prosy as the index to a treatise on botany or ornithology. But they who make this charge know not whereof they speak. Ten to one, they have never learned to love and reverence Nature herself. Doubtless they and their ilk would be happier with Dryden than with Keats, more contented in a drawing-room at any season or hour than in Arcadia on the loveliest morning God ever made.

A few days ago I casually thumbed a volume of Cawein. It was like the calling of a thousand pleasant voices from pastures and woodland and roadside and farm. Now the whippoorwill and the sheepbells welcomed me, and a lamp was lit in some distant farmhouse. Now it was August, oppressive with dust and drought, ragweed and browned meadows. Now a clear pool with speckled trout invited me. Now the scene changed to winter, stern with yelling winds and smothered white fields. And anon I passed a deserted saw-mill, a lonely, cabinless chimney, a broken gate, and a dilapidated picket-fence, all starred with morning-glories and sweet-potato blossoms. "The same old pictures again and again and again!" you cry perchance. Yes, yes; I'll grant you that! And why not?

Does an operatic air lose its tunefulness by recurring twice or thrice? Is the night less lovely for having ten thousand stars instead of one? Is the rosebush less sweet because of its hundred roses?

Say that Madison Cawein was sometimes artificial and often commonplace. Charge him with being too hasty, too prolific, too repetitious. Point out his inferiority, as a philosopher, to at least a score of other American bards, past and present. But verily, if you know Cawein and nature well, you will never dream of denying that he was a consummate painter of rural scenes. And though he may have taken you on a dozen delightful journeys to Fairyland; though he may often have delighted your soul with smooth numbers and easy rhymes; though he may even have comforted you with some homely bit of healthy optimism; your happiest remembrance of him, I daresay, will be that he taught you to approach Nature, advancing with awakened senses and open heart.—*H. Houston Peckham.*

Sewanee Review, October, 1915:

THE OTHER MADISON CAWEIN

By Anna Blanche McGill

[Literary Critic and Poet.]

Henry James once took his own and his adopted countrymen to task for "granting a prodigious ear to some one manifestation of an author's talent and caring nothing whatsoever for the others."

From a sympathy thus limited the late Madison Cawein in some measure suffered. Cordially applauded for certain achievements, he often failed to receive due recognition for his other activities. Upon his conspicuous gifts as observer and interpreter of the exquisite in nature hearty acclaim was bestowed; but meantime in other fields he exercised his talent with a charm and an artistry which might have secured his fame, had not his eminent and original success with the delicate and the fanciful focussed critical taste—occasionally to the neglect of his other poetizings.

The particular dictum which Mr. Cawein himself never relished was that which pronounced his work deficient in human interest. With some measure of truth a discriminating critic once interpreted this charge as high praise. Just the fact, said this critic, that his poetry transports to a region different from the work-a-day, dragon-slaying world is one of its prime charms; thus it fulfils that excellent function of art—the refreshment of the spirit in a diviner ether, the liberation of the fancy into an ampler air than that of the sometimes all too human.

However apposite this praise none the less is it true that one of the chief sources of Mr. Cawein's appeal may be traced to certain

essentially human elements in his poetry. For, though the materials of his muse were largely of that world familiarly generalized as "Nature," it is somewhat paradoxical that, with a frequency so repeated as to have become characteristic, those materials when finally shaped into poetry were mingled with ingredients distinctly human. This "human" note resulted partly from the fact that the poet's materials were presented through a definite human personality intensely loving what it reproduced. Moreover, those materials were frequently so rich with associations deeply imbedded in the human heart, its affections, its memories.

However inadequately general criticism has noted this, there is one instance of greater discrimination which makes amends for lesser visions. Mr. Howells, so prompt and generous in his recognition of Mr. Cawein's early work, spoke again a few years ago in terms which did honor to the poet and did still more honor to Mr. Howells' own magnanimity and critical integrity. With fine simplicity correcting or supplementing one of his earlier comments, he said: "I had not stayed to see that his nature poetry was instinct with human poetry, with mine, with yours.....I ought to have said, as I had seen, that not one of his lovely landscapes in which I could discover no human figure, but thrilled with a human presence penetrating to it from his most sensitive and subtle spirit until it was all but painfully alive with memories, with regrets, with longings, with hopes, with all that from time to time mutably constitutes us men and women, and yet keeps us children."

In poem after poem lies illustration of Mr. Howells' text. Among Mr. Cawein's most typical inspirations were ancestral fields and farms, old gardens, old homes among the hills ["Old Homes"]:

> Old homes among the hills! I love their gardens,
> Their old rock-fences, that our day inherits;
> Their doors, 'round which the great trees stand like wardens,
> Their paths, down which the shadows march like spirits;
> Broad doors and paths that reach bird-haunted gardens.
>
> I see them gray among their ancient acres,
> Severe of front, their gables lichen-sprinkled—
> Like gentle-hearted, solitary Quakers,
> Grave and religious, with kind faces wrinkled—
> Serene among their memory-hallowed acres.
>
> Their gardens, banked with roses and with lilies—
> Those sweet aristocrats of all the flowers—
> Where Springtime coins her gold in daffodillies,
> And Autumn mints her marigolds in showers,
> And all the hours are toilless as the lilies.

I love their orchards where the gay woodpecker
Flits, flashing o'er you, like a winged jewel;
Their woods, whose floors of moss the squirrels checker
With half-hulled nuts; and where, in cool renewal,
The wild brooks laugh, and raps the red woodpecker.

Old homes! Old hearts! upon my soul forever
Their peace and gladness lie like tears and laughter;
Like love they touch me, through the years that sever,
With simple faith; like friendship, draw me after
The dreamy patience that is theirs forever.

Just as characteristic is such a mood as was the poet's persistent aspiration toward ideal beauty. It is just as typical as his remarkable response to the delicate and exquisite in color, sound, fragrance, movement—a response which ranks his work with the most enchantingly sensuous poetry in English or American literature. If to walk with him in the woods was a lesson in the swift reaction of the human senses—to the thin song of grig or cricket, the flutter of a twilight-moth's wings, the hermit thrush's magic flute, to the iridescence of autumn or to some patch of bluets whose pale pastel was sometimes too far away to arrest ordinary vision—so now, no less, to turn his page is to be aware of unmistakable emotional response. Over and over again upon the tapestry of his page are embroidered scenes intimately associated with human destiny [from "The Old Home"]:

An old lane, an old gate, an old house by a tree;
A wild wood, a wild brook—they will not let me be;
In boyhood I knew them and still they call to me;

Now it is an old barn, "low, swallow-swept and grey." And now [from "The Old Spring"]:

Fern and leaf-hid gleaming homeward,
Drips the wildwood spring I knew,
Drips the spring my boyhood knew.

Still again the "long, long thoughts" are stirred by some homelier but scarcely less beguiling ancient water mill ["The Old Water Mill"] with its—

. . . . cob-webbed stairs and loft and grain-strewn floor,
Thy doors—like some brown honest hand of toil
And honorable with labor of the soil,
Forever open.

The simple and happy trope of the last lines is indicative of Mr. Cawein's image-making gift in characteristic play. It illustrates his frequent employment of some human quality to emphasize some

aspect of nature and, vice versa, his finding in nature some analogy for a human personality or situation. With particular felicity this technical trait is exemplified in such lines as these [from "At the Lane's End"]:

> The garden there—where the soft sky clears
> Like an old sweet face that has dried its tears.

One of the most impressive and sustained instances of this trope-making occurs in "A Voice on the Wind"—a poem palpitant with both human emotion and feeling for Nature's pathetic aspects:

> Who is she who wanders alone,
> When the wind drives sheer and the rain is blown?
> Who walks all night and makes her moan:
> "O my children, come home!"
> Whose face is raised to the blinding gale,
> Whose hair blows black and whose eyes are pale,
> While over the world goes by her wail,—
> "O my children, come home, come home!
> O my children, come home!"
> 'Tis the Spirit of Autumn, no man sees,
> The mother of Death and Mysteries,
> Who cries on the wind all night to these,
> "O my children, come home!"
> The Spirit of Autumn, pierced with pain,
> Calling her children home again,
> Death and Dreams, through ruin and rain—
> "O, my children, come home, come home!
> O my children, come home!"

Meantime with even greater copiousness Mr. Cawein's familiar Nature World offered him comparisons when he wished to poetize human emotion or episode. Effectively was he thus served in the beautiful lines of "A Flower of the Fields," a poem subtly and artistically presenting a story against a lovely and humanized background:

> All seemed the same: the martin-box—
> Sun-warped with pigmy balconies—
> Still stood with all its twittering flocks,
> Perched on its pole above the peas
> And silvery-seeded onion-stocks.
>
> The clover-pink and the rose; the clump
> Of coppery sunflowers, with the heat
> Sick to the heart; the garden stump,
> Red with geranium pots, and sweet
> With moss and ferns, this side the pump.

Noon nodded; dreamier, lonesomer
  For one long, plaintive, forest-side
Bird-quaver.—And I knew me near
  Some heartbreak anguish. . . . She had died.
I felt it, and no need to hear!

I passed the quince and pear-tree; where
  All up the porch, a grape-vine trails—
How strange, that fruit, whatever air
  Or earth it grows in, never fails
To find its native flavor there!

And she was as a flower, too,
  That grows its proper bloom and scent
No matter what the soil; she, who,
  Born better than her place, still lent
Grace to the lowliness she knew.

Still another engaging mirroring of the human heart in the larger heart of Nature is that achieved in the poem "Unrequited," with its fine similitude for an obdurate breast:

So have I seen a clear October pool,
  Cold liquid topaz, set within the sear
Gold of the woodland, tremorless and cool,
  Reflecting all the heartbreak of the year.

So have I seen a rose set round with thorn,
  Sung to and sung to by a bird of spring,
And when, breast-pierced, the bird lay all forlorn,
  The rose bloomed on, fair and unnoticing.

But throughout those numerous poems wherein appear both nature and the human, Mr. Cawein's art was never happier than in those several lines which the reader's memory may frame as "Landscapes with figures." What Wordsworth repeatedly did for the Westmoreland peasants and what the nineteenth century French painters did for the open-air toilers of France, Mr. Cawein, with faithful, sympathetic brush, did for the harvesters, the berriers, the vintagers of his native land. Types of healthy toil, of pastoral romance, these figures are characteristically American, indeed often Kentuckian, yet in a sense also universal. It is significant that Mr. Gosse, in his English edition of Mr. Cawein's work, felt impelled to include several of these portraits—that of "The Tollman's Daughter," for instance:

. . . . waist-deep among the briers; . . . .
For her I know where'er she trod
Each dew-drop raised a looking-glass
To flash her beauty from the grass;
That wild-flowers bloomed along the sod,
And whispered perfume when she smiled;
The wood-birds hushed to hear her song.

For fidelity and charm of presentation several poems of this order are not unworthy of standing beside the "Solitary Reaper" and other Wordsworthian figure-pieces, or Keats' Ruth "in tears amid the alien corn." Yet unlike these classic examples many of the Caweinian figures take their charm less from their note of pathos or philosophy than from their wholesome vigor and idyllic quality. They are nearer to Tennyson's "Dora," or "The Miller's Daughter." No brothers of "The Man With the Hoe," as Edwin Markham saw him, are these types—if none the less authentic [from "Forest and Field"]:

The brawny-throated harvesters,
Their red brows beaded with the heat,
By twos and threes among the wheat. . . . .
The binders—men and maids that sing
Like some mad troop of piping Pan. . . . .

Or these [from "Summer"]:

Come where the reapers whet the scythe,
Where golden sheaves are heaped, where berries blythe
With willow basket and with pail,
Swarm knoll and plain;
Where flowers freckle every vale
And beauty goes with hands of berry stain.

Still more beguiling is such a group as this [from "Forest and Field"]:

And down the orchard vistas—young,
A hickory basket by him swung,
A straw-hat, 'gainst the sloping sun
Drawn brim-broad o'er his face—he strode
As if he looked to find some one,
His eyes far-fixed beyond the road. . . . .
And where the cows' melodious bells
Trailed music up and down the dells, ...
He saw her waiting, fair and slim,

Her pail forgotten there for him. . . . .
Across the rambling fence she leaned
Her fresh round arms all white and bare,
Her artless beauty, bonnet-screened,
Rich-colored with its auburn hair.
A wood-thrush gurgled in a vine—
Ah! 'tis his step, 'tis he she hears.

The imagists, the sociological versifiers, and other exponents of the contemporary muse's *dernier cri*, have endeavored to lead us far from this kind of poetry. But there are many to whom it still appeals. It is as characteristic of certain aspects of America as Whittier's or Whitman's poems, or our multitudinous short stories, infused with local color, are of their respective scenes and inspirations.

Though the beauty of his Kentucky meadows was always persuading Mr. Cawein to reproduce its idyllic features and figures, not always were his landscapes with figures so serene and amiable. For instance, his striking poem, "The Feud," for all its concessions here and there to Beauty, is just as successful in rendering the wild and undisciplined in nature and man as other poems are in memorializing the calm and fair:

Rocks, trees and rocks; and down a mossy stone
The murmuring ooze and trickle of a stream
Through bushes where the mountain spring lies lone—
A gleaning cairngorm where the shadows dream—
And one wild road winds like a saffron seam.

Here sang the thrush, whose pure mellifluous note
Dripped golden sweetness on the fragrant June;
Here cat- and blue-bird and wood-sparrow wrote
Their presence on the silence with a tune;
And here the fox drank 'neath the mountain moon. . . . .

A wasp buzzed by, and then a butterfly
In orange and amber, like a floating flame;
And then a man, hard-eyed and very sly,
Gaunt-cheeked and haggard and a little lame,
With an old rifle down the mountain came.

He listened, drinking from a flask he took
Out of the ragged pocket of his coat;
Then all around him cast a stealthy look;
Lay down, and watched an eagle soar and float,
His fingers clutching at his hairy throat.

The shades grew longer, and each Cumberland height
  Loomed, framed in splendours of the dolphin dusk.
Around the road a horseman rode in sight;
  Young, tall, blond-bearded. Silent, grim, and brusque,
  He in the thicket aimed.—The gun rang husk;

And echoes barked among the hills and made
  Repeated instants of the shot's distress—
Then silence—and the trampled bushes swayed—
  Then silence, packed with murder and the press
  Of distant hoof that galloped riderless.

Those who know Mr. Cawein chiefly as interpreter of the exquisite, worshipper of Ideal Beauty, as devotee of classic divinities—faun, nymph, dryad, of Oberon and Queen Mab—may here find a sinewy expression, a virile imagination as typical, as adequate for the theme as are his delicate fancy and his exquisite phrasing for his more Ariel-like moods and visions.

So fresh and ardent was Mr. Cawein's work at its best, so happy and abundant were his native wood-notes wild, insufficient recognition was sometimes given to his craftsmanship. Though by no means was his technique always perfect, by no means was his artistry entirely negligible. It was evident in his several feud poems and in many others of less melodramatic quality. This craftsmanship was often displayed in the evocation of atmosphere and in the focussing of dramatic episode or significant emotion in a final line or stanza. Extraordinarily sensitive himself to "spirit of place," Mr. Cawein was often most impressive in poems wherein the influences of the scene were interpreted as being no less potent than those of articulate human personality. An example of this is in the final division of "At the Lane's End." This intensely human poem presents—if by suggestion rather than explicit narrative—a drama of human lapse, spiritual awakening, spiritual renewal. Its earlier portion pictures an old home:

The clouds roll up and the clouds roll down
Over the roof of the little town;
Out in the fields where the pike winds by
Fields of clover and bottoms of rye.
You will find the pales of the fallen fence,
And the tangled orchard and vineyard, dense
With the weedy neglect of the thirty years. . . . .
And here was a nook for the princess plumes,
The snap-dragons and the poppy-blooms,
Mother's sweet-williams and pansy flowers,
And the morning glories' bewildered bowers,

Tipping their cornucopias up
For the humming-birds that came to sup. . . . .
And the old log-house where my innocence died,
With my boyhood buried side by side.

Then follow lines which more forcibly than description press home the point of the poem; no comment is needed to heighten or praise the contrast between the tender, dreaming beauty of the deserted home and the blighted, wasted heart of its returning prodigal:

Shall a man with face as withered and gray
As a wasp-nest stowed in a loft away—
Where the hornets haunt and the mortar drops
From the loosened log of the clap-board tops—
Whom vice has aged as the rotting rooms
The rain where memories haunt the glooms;
A hitch in his joints like the rheum that gnars
In the rasping hinge of the door that jars;
A harsh crackling throat like the old stone flue
Where the swallows build the summers through;
Shall a man, I say, with the spider sins
That the long years spin in the outs and ins
Of his soul, returning to see once more
His boyhood's home. . . . .
Shall he not take comfort and know the truth
In its thread-bare raiment of falsehood?—Yea!
In his crumbled past he shall kneel and pray,
Like a pilgrim come to the shrine again
Of the homely saints that shall soothe his pain,
And arise and depart, made clean from stain!

This poem belongs to Mr. Cawein's earlier period of work, but its mood and tone recur in some of his later poems. These more and more bore witness to a deepening of thought and feeling. His work in this vein compares by no means unfavorably with that of others less narrowly identified than he with the sensuous, the old delectable world of ever-changing hue, of beautiful form and bewitching sound—the dream-peopled landscape of "Genius Loci"—

For all around me upon field and hill
Enchantment lies as of mysterious flutes.

Briefly and memorably are spiritual values affirmed in such poems as "The Over-soul," "Prayer for Old Age," "The Shadow," and the oft-quoted sonnet, "Our Dreams," beginning, "Spare us our dreams." Marked by a spiritual tone still more sustained are

three lyric dramas in the volume entitled *The Shadow Garden and Other Plays*. If no great praise may be accorded to the dramatic merits of these plays, high claim may be made for the rare beauty and seriousness of their spiritual tone and poetic art. The phantasy which gives the book its name is as ethereal as some of the earlier Maeterlinckian dramas, without, however, any suggestion of morbidness. The scenes reverse the formula of some of the Flemish playwright's works—by moving not to a tragic *denouement* but to a finale of reconciliation and happiness. Gossamer-fine the texture of this phantasy, its subsidiary characters being those lovely small things of earth which charmed the poet's senses. But for all its dream-spun woof, it is definitely woven across by spiritual beauty. Its dominant idea is: the wisdom of holding fast to the Dream; a fidelity whereby the erring and disillusioned may yet be free—"as young-eyed Innocence"—of the heart's Eden so alluringly adumbrated in "The Shadow Garden."

For all the ethical implications of this phantasy, its author in theory and practice shunned moralizing perhaps more resolutely than did any other poet of his day who took his art seriously. His was a philosophy different from that of Sainte-Beuve about the True, the Good, the Beautiful—Mr. Cawein would have chosen for his own motto, the Beautiful, trusting the True and the Good to take care of themselves. That they sometimes do—even to the point of ultimately and significantly gaining the allegiance of one originally dedicated to the third of their great trinity—is attested by two other dramas in *The Shadow Garden*. These, "The Witch" and "The House of Fear," are fairly solemn in their enunciation of what is widely accepted as a genuine spiritual verity. Despite their occasionally happy freight of sensuous beauty, both are homilies on the text that one saving grace can avail to bring the erring back to the upward way

> A mite of good
> Within a soul outweighs a ton of evil.

Pity and Love are the redeeming forces in "The Witch." In "The House of Fear" the saving grace is that third of the golden virtues to whose potency preacher and poet have done, one sometimes thinks, but inadequate justice—Immortal Hope—before whose might and splendor vanish Despair and other sombre figures of the play.

For the aesthetic theorists and other philosophers these dramas, despite their shortcomings, offer material for comment and speculation; for instance, about that mystery—the power of sensuously perceived beauty to exalt the soul and lead it to the verge of that Kingdom of Perfection whose three great towers are the Good, the True, the Beautiful. For, the statement may be safely ventured, it

was largely through his passion for the loveliness of the visible world and its influence upon him that Mr. Cawein advanced to apprehension of the inner, no less various and beautiful realm of things spiritual; in the earthly fair he came to discern the clue [from "The House of Life"]:

> That leads us to His Presence
> Above the starry blue.

It is not without significance that both worlds, external and spiritual, are side by side poetized in some of the most lovely and impassioned lines of his maturity—the conclusion of "The House of Fear." Now that he lies dead all too soon, these lines may not inappositely serve as his own exultant epitaph:

> Light breaks around me and the winds of dawn
> Sweep the wild mists of tempest far to sea.
> There is no darkness now, but rivered light,
> Flowing from out the source of boundless day.
> And beauty, who I dreamed was dead, behold, ...
> Beckons me yonder from the daybreak!—there,
> Silver and snow above the infinite blue. . . . .
> And I am free to run and shout with morn
> Upon her hills, one with the Sons of Heaven,
> And all the stars! . . . .

—*Anna Blanche McGill.*

The Bellman, August 12, 1916:

CAWEIN AND RILEY: POETS OF AMERICA

By Henry Adams Bellows

[Associate Editor of *The Bellman*]

It is regretable and rather curious that, although a year and a half has elapsed since the death of Madison Cawein, little or nothing seems to have been done to bring together his poetical work and issue it in such complete form as to command the critical attention it deserves. The recent death of James Whitcomb Riley emphasizes what the country lost in losing Cawein, for the two poets belonged, despite their differences of manner, to the same school. Both were leaders in what may be called the transition period of American poetry, bridging the gap between the older poets, Longfellow, Lowell,

Whittier and the rest, and the men and women whose activities are so new, and often so startling, that their positions as poets are yet matters for vigorous debate. With Cawein and Riley both gone, that period may be said to have closed; and it was a period that deserves memory and respect.

Riley was the older of the two by a dozen years, but there was by no means so much difference in their literary chronology. Riley's first published book, *The Old Swimmin' Hole and 'Leven More Poems*, was published in 1883; Cawein's earliest book, *Blooms of the Berry*, only four years later. For about twenty years they wrote and published side by side, a book every year or two. Then Riley practically ceased writing; more and more of the volumes bearing his name, which were brought out with unabated frequency, were new editions or collections of poems written in his earlier days. Cawein went on, up to the time of his death, with unabated energy. The newer tendencies of poetry in the last decade touched him as they never touched Riley; without formally joining the band of the younger poets, he felt and expressed the spirit which animated them. Thus, even more than Riley, his work formed the connecting link in American poetry, and there is much history to be read between the lines of the columns from *Blooms of the Berry* to *The Poet and Nature*.

Both Cawein and Riley have been generally praised most highly for their Americanism. This does not mean, in either case, that they had the slighest tendency to blustering eulogy of their country; their Americanism was never ostentatious. But they drew their inspiration directly from the life about them, from the nature outside their own windows, and the men and women who came and went in their own streets. Riley was everywhere known as "the Hoosier poet"; Cawein has happily been called "the Laureate of Kentucky." Both deserved their titles, as honours and with the implied limitations. Both clearly betrayed their environment in their work. Nature in Indiana is not a thing of mystical beauty; one would hardly seek refuge from the cares and trials of life by getting away from the flat towns and gazing over an expanse of equally flat plain. Riley saw, first of all, the towns and the people, saw them and loved them. Cawein saw the hills and streams and woods of Kentucky; while Riley produced Lockerbie Street, Cawein wrote Nature Notes and Impressions.

Historically, there is no shadow of question that Riley was the more interesting of the two, and for the very reason that his work was no more than objective, and dealt with people. He was almost as much a recorder of the life of his time and place as Mark Twain. Apart from the peculiar charm of the best of Riley's poetry, it will always be read as a contribution, and an important one, to American history. The world—Indiana even—will never again be quite the same as it was when Riley loved it and wrote about it. Cawein's subjects—nature and nature's reflection of human emotions—have

been available for two thousand years, and will be equally available for two thousand more. Kentucky was to him much what the Lake Country was to Wordsworth, New England to Whittier.

For this very reason Cawein's chance of being widely read a century after his death is far more nearly equal to Riley's than their present popularity would indicate. It is significant that his work has been praised by competent English critics quite as highly as by American, which is by no means true of Riley's poems. Cawein aimed high and the best of his poetry is local only in the sense that its pictures of nature take their color from the region where he lived. Against that background he expressed the emotions that have always been the themes of the best poetry; his claim to enduring greatness rests on the sureness of that expression.

His work was quite sufficient in extent to give his readers a full conception of what he strove to do; during his lifetime he published no less than thirty-four volumes—a few of them, to be sure, consisting mainly of poems republished from earlier books of his. I do not pretend to have read every poem in every volume; but wherever I have looked, the general level has seemed to me exceptionally high. He did remarkably little poor or even mediocre work. The question is rather as to the quality of his very best than as to that of the whole. The mass certainly entitles him to a permanent place among the American poets; the best must indicate just where that place should be.

At the time of his death most critics laid particular stress on his services as the poet of Kentucky. This was entirely natural, for it was distinctly in accordance with his own wish. But now, looking back over his work, it seems to me that the best of it has only an incidental relation to his native state. Nature poetry which insists too strongly on the features of a particular landscape is, after all, sharply limited in its appeal. The New England poets suffered often from that defect; too frequently they would not let the reader, wherever he might be, fill in the pictures from his own experience; he must see their pictures or none at all. Contrast this method with that of Wordsworth at his best. "Tintern Abbey" and "Peele Castle" are just as vivid for those who have never seen the exact spots described as for those who have.

In his earlier work Cawein was apt to let Kentucky come between him and the rest of the world. But as he grew older, he learned how much greater are the resemblances than the differences. More and more he dwelt on human emotions, with nature as the background; whereas, in his earlier work, nature had often been the direct inspiration to the emotions themselves. The transition was from nature—Kentucky nature—seeking man, to man seeking nature. Thus there was a steady gain in the broadness of his appeal, and consequently it is among his later poems that I find most of those on which the permanence of his reputation is likely to rest.

Estimates Of His Poetry

Gifted with a remarkable facility in the handling of verse, Cawein had also a keen sense of the values of words. He seldom stumbled; one almost never feels that he would have said anything differently if he had known how. Technically he was as well equipped for the writing of poetry as any American who has essayed that task in the last thirty years. Nor did he suffer from overgrown theories. He wrote, evidently, as he thought, using a great variey of forms with absolute ease and freedom, and never bending his expression to conform to the rules of theorists, or to demonstrate theories of his own.

I find the key to a good part of the philosophy expressed by his poems in a single sentence from a personal letter, which I owe to the courtesy of Edward J. O'Brien. "I believe in dryads and fairies," Cawein wrote, "but I have never seen one." In all his work one feels this consciousness of unfulfilled faith. Not only had he never seen the things he believed in, but he knew he never would. There is a touch of sadness almost everywhere; not the solemnity that comes in the face of strengthening beauty, but the resignation that grows from the recognition that the beauty one loves is eternally far away, too remote even to be dreamed of.

The love of beauty was a genuine passion with Cawein, but not altogether an inspiring one. His poetry has sometimes suggested to me Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" with the great stanza—the next to the last one—left out. One always misses the outburst of hope, the spirit of "No hungry generations tread thee down." And this, it seems to me, is where Cawein's work, even at its best, just fell short of true greatness. Everything else he had—felicity of diction, fluency of verse, keen sensitiveness to beauty, vivid imagination, the power of seizing upon and expressing delicate shades of feeling—but he lacked the kind of enthusiasm, the kind of faith, that could alone put all these to the highest purpose.

Lacking this type of greatness, his poetry depends primarily on its charm. Concerning this I quote a couple of paragraphs from an article by the critic already mentioned, Mr. O'Brien:

"It is now many years since Edmund Gosse hailed an English selection of Mr. Cawein's *Kentucky Poems* as one of the finest portrayals of landscape that our letters could show. These poems, which probably represent Mr. Cawein's best feeling and expression, are the fine interpretation of a literary pantheism, which may have lacked subtlety, but which never could be said to be insincere in mirroring nature in its most shy and elusive moods. The beauty of wood life to Mr. Cawein meant a return to the old Greek feeling of nature worship, passionately voiced in the wind and in running streams. He felt the sympathy of trees, and made the reader feel the essential wood magic in all its secrecy, in a life peopled with dryads, nymphs and satyrs, cruel and kind alternately as nature is cruel and kind, and jealous of human challenge and invasion.

"In all his work, implicit in his earliest volumes as well as in the very latest of the fairy plays and poems, the reader was conscious of a childish simplicity which forebore to question nature, and, in the continuous search for reality in silent places, tended to repudiate, perhaps unhappily for his creative vision, the human passions of his race and time. He always desired to touch objectively the imaginative beauties of which he had so real a subjective experience. This accounts for the sadness of incomplete achievement which is never absent from his best poetry, a kind of spiritual nostalgia which made him feel that he was born out of his age in a materialistic environment where the old gods might not live and fact continually warred on fancy. Mr. Cawein never revealed a creative imagination which could pierce satisfactorily through the mists of material substance in the essential verities which lay behind them. But his fancy was incomparable and well-nigh inexhaustible in its romantic fecundity. In Kentucky he found an individual landscape which he could people with his fancy, and in this kind of creation he was assisted by an absence of self-conscious environment which is now almost impossible of attainment in the populous countryside of the older countries, by reason of which the passionate nature poet is so rare in England, and our own eastern seaboard today." [From *Boston Transcript*, December 19, 1914:—The Impress Left Upon American Literature by the late Madison Cawein, by Edward J. O'Brien, quoted in full on pages 155 to 158 of this volume.]

I have spoken of Madison Cawein as bridging the gap in American poetry between the old writers and the new. He did this far more completely than his literary contemporary and near neighbor, Riley, because he never achieved phenomenal popularity on the strength of a single sharply defined type of verse. Riley was not allowed to move far in any direction: he had exactly hit the public taste at the outset, and he was almost compelled to keep to his own course. Cawein, never so successful, was freer to swing with the tide. His earlier poetry echoed the older traditions; it was marked as excellent by its descriptive vividness and charm, but it was in no sense a blazing of new trails. Many of the traditions clung to him to the end, yet he was by no means out of sympathy with the new movement; among his later poems are a few which might have been the more conservative work of some of the radicals—if they had had his ability.

There was a period when most of the poetry produced in this country was conspicuously un-American. Longfellow was dead; the poets whose voices are heard today are still going to such schools as their genius would brook. For a couple of decades American poetry, for the most part, took its inspiration out of books, with the result that it had form, but not much else. Through this time of slack water Madison Cawein wrote poetry which came, not from the writings of others, but from his own life as an American amid American

surroundings. A new day has recently dawned—whether altogether for good is yet too early to say—and the poets are now American if nothing else. But Cawein's work preserved the tradition of genuineness in our national poetry through a period when it sorely needed such a preserver; and it is to be hoped that before long the necessary steps will be taken to bring his poems before the public in the proper way, that the world may recognize both the full extent of his services and the full measure of his excellence.—*Henry Adams Bellows.*

XII

CAWEIN AND SOME OF HIS KENTUCKY FRIENDS

By Bert Finck

Louisville, Kentucky

The following article was read by Mr. Finck before The Louisville Literary Club, Cawein Memorial Meeting, December 11, 1916. He called it, "Madison Cawein and Other Kentucky Writers I Have Known." It was published in *The Kentucky Magazine*, August, 1917, under the title "Madison Cawein and Kindred Souls." Since only those Kentuckians who were personal friends of both Mr. Finck and Mr. Cawein are represented in this article, the title is here changed to Cawein and Some of His Kentucky Friends:

When I think of Madison Cawein I become a part of another world; one thought of him lifts me into that other world as if by a conjurer's wand, and the dreary scenes of daily existence fade away as though they never had been. And still it is the same old world, but illuminated by the light of Cawein's soul, which brings to view the gold and gems concealed therein. It is the light of his sincerity, for it was its rays that brightened and made beautiful all the objects with which he came in contact, and which gave a radiant glow to the paths he trod. Sincerity was the keynote of Cawein's personality; he was incapable of playing an untrue part; he had a holy, religious scorn of all pretension and pretenders, and a native horror of insincerity and hypocrisy.

First, and above all, he was sincere in his love of the spirit of poetry and in his aspiration to lay worthy tributes at her feet. It was more than love—it was adoration that he felt, and he was always a devotee at this shrine. Devout as he was in his love and worship of poetry, Cawein was quick to recognize others who were kneeling at his side, and though the tributes of those others might often have been crude and humble, he was ever ready to respect and reverence them if they were in the least way real. He, himself a towering oak in the realms of art, had vision to perceive wild flowers scattered about below, and he would at once greet them with encouragement

and sympathy and smile upon them and speak to them as being among his own. This none but the sincere can do. Shallowness is afraid to acknowledge any worth in others; shallowness must exert all its vision in keeping itself from falling and from being shattered to pieces. Cawein, grand, true poet-soul that he was, never knew such a fear; he would be still the oak, though he bent down and saluted, in a spirit of fellowship, a blade of grass or a violet. He was illumined with the glorious truth which made him kind and generous. We cannot all be stars or mountains in the world of art, but many of us can be hills and brooks that beautify the scene; and, if nothing else, we can be vines that adorn a crumbling wall; and even weeds have flowers. In his unselfish love for poetry, Cawein would have been happy to have seen every man and woman laying tributes of some kind, provided they were true, upon its altar. Charleatanism and pretension envy the talents of others; genius always welcomes them, as did Cawein.

His every breath was filled with soul-deep yearning to lay glorious offerings before the muse, and that was the secret of his weirdly wistful smile, which the discerning Kentucky artist, J. Bernhard Alberts, so aptly appreciated and understood, and which he so faithfully depicted in his portrait of Cawein, now one of the richest treasures in the Alberts studio. [The portrait was presented to the Filson Club by Mr. Alberts, in 1920.]

Cawein was sincere in his love of Nature. He reveled in it, communed with it in his own language. He was at home with it in its every whim and mood. He was familiar with its mysterious secrets, and its messages he unfolded to the world. His face would be a kaleidoscope of emotions, as he listened to the voices of the brooklet and the winds; his frame would tremble with joy as he bent over and caressed a wildflower; he had a story to tell of that wildflower's every shade of color and of the gossiping leaves that were reciting wonderful events. Here was a fairy's slipper which she had dropped in a hurried flight; here was a dryad's footstep, and there was the shadow of Pan reflected in that pool. As he spoke I believed what he said was true—as I do still, and ever shall—for his soul was a companion of Nature's soul, and he thus could hear and see as few mortals could.

Many tributes have been paid to the memory of Cawein, but there is one that appeals to me in his connection with his love of Nature, for it pictures him as I have often seen and felt him to be. It is the poem of another true and sincere poet—one for whom Cawein had great admiration, and whose offerings to poetry he rapidly perceived and welcomed—that of Margaret Steele Anderson. Even had she written nothing more than this one great poem, "The Dead Poet"—and her volumes of poems are filled throughout with perfect gold—the name of Margaret Steele Anderson would have shone forever among the stars of classic literature:

Madison Cawein

The Dead Poet

In Memory of Madison Cawein.

Dryads, why weep you in the beeches there?
Why pluck the leafy garlands from your hair?
What news is this that seems so dark and dread?
Alas! Alas! our own true love is dead!

And you, O naiads, why do you forsake
The frolic of the fountain and the lake?
Why sit you on the marge so sad and lorn?
He played with us who far away is borne!

O, Thalia, so beautiful and free!
O, all you Nine of fairest Castaly,
What sorrow's this that stays your dancing throng?
Lo, we have lost the comrade of our song!

Then seek I joy the very gods among!
Hermes, Apollo, Dionysius young!
Sweet Aphrodite! Nay, the gods are weeping—
O, poet, wake! all Hellas mourns your sleeping!

Margaret Steele Anderson.

Cawein was sincere in his affections and in his love for his home. He and I were most frequently together when he lived in the old house at Nineteenth and Market streets, Louisville, with his sister and parents, to whom he was devoted. Never did a day pass without his stopping, in the midst of his regular visits to the central parts of the city, to purchase a gift for his mother or sister—even the old parrot was not forgotten, for it must have its cakes and peanuts. He loved the very walls of the old house and enriched it with fancies and beings of his poetic imagination. I can see him sitting in his favorite armchair in his library, looking over his numerous packages of mail that he would receive daily; many letters enclosing verses from unknown writers craving sympathy and criticism; appeals from obscure newspapers and magazines for contributions or financial aid; and he would always be genuinely interested in them all, saying: "Here is something good—he needs a little encouragement. Yes, I shall help that poor devil of an editor." And while he was speaking the old black cat would sleepily loll into the room, and Madison would say that she was exhausted from her share in the witch's revels of the night before; and the parrot, reminding him of her existence by a scream, the poet would tell about the coffee party which the bird had attended a short while before, where all the parrots met and gossiped

about what occurred in their homes. The very pictures and statues in the room were brightened with mystical tales, and there were mysterious sounds and ghostly whisperings. His home life was poetry itself.

His love for his friends was strong, loyal and enthusiastic, and his friends were scattered among all classes of society and in all parts of the world. But he was drawn only toward the sincere; in the presence of the artificial he shut himself up like a clam. He was trustful of his friends and confided in them—kept nothing at all from them concealed. He would speak of them constantly and see only good in them; their joys and sorrows were his. I can see him quivering with indignation over a wrong inflicted upon one who was dear to him, and I can hear him uttering all the maledictions conceivable upon the heads of them that injured his friend. I can see him with face of absolute misery because of a misfortune that had befallen a literary companion and wondering how the sun could shine in the midst of his sorrow. For Cawein was sympathy incarnate, and therefore, like all true poets, a sufferer. His soul was often in tears; he bore not only the agonies of his own cross, but also those of others. There was, indeed, no part of Cawein's personality that was not sincere; he was sincere in his love for poetry and in his aspirations; sincere in his love for nature, art and the beautiful; sincere in his affections; sincere in his dreams and imagination that transformed the very stones he touched into nuggets of gold.

As I think of Madison Cawein, there arises before me a group of Louisville writers, who are now singing with him in the world of eternal song—writers who were his friends and mine; men and women, earnest and true, or they would not have been friends of Cawein: Will S. Hays, Charles J. O'Malley, Octavia Hensel, Anna Chase Deppen, Isaac T. Woodson and William F. Wood. There was Hewett Green, brilliant artist and newspaper writer, whose disposition was as lovable and attractive as were the products of his brush and pen. And Marie Thixton, faithful newspaper writer, who died a martyr to her work. Then there was John Duncan, a tireless student, fascinating conversationalist, interesting newspaper writer, and human encyclopedia. Duncan was an enthusiastic lover of Shakespeare and the classics; an authority on botany and a friend of Huxley and of Darwin.

I see Will S. Hays standing at the street corner, hailing each passerby, knowing every one by name, uttering bright, witty remarks; like Burns, not only in the lyrical sweetness of his verse, but also in his love for the humbler classes of mankind. He drew inspiration from actual life; his soul was constantly bubbling with sympathy for the unhappy and the wronged and with indignation against acts of the oppressor. Hays wept with the widow, the orphan, the girl betrayed, and he laughed with humanity's simple joys and made the

world sweeter, kinder and mellower by his songs. Like his friend, Cawein, he was sincere, and, therefore, simple in his manners, outspoken against hypocrisy, shallowness and fraud. While his name will be immortal through his touching heart-songs, his newspaper paragraphs will not be easily forgotten—his homely philosophy of river incidents and life.

I can never forget my emotions at an evening concert at one of the hotels in Lucerne, Switzerland, many years ago, when, before an enthusiastic audience composed of people from all parts of the world, an English girl stepped forward and sang "Molly Darling," to the enticing accompaniment of an Italian band. But I do not believe that all that I or any one else might ever say about Will S. Hays could so truly and beautifully picture the worth of his genius as does the exquisite sonnet by Dr. Henry A. Cottell:

THE KENTUCKY CARDINAL

In Memory of Will S. Hays

As morning blushed and peered with eye of gray,
Through orchard bough, with Maytime blossoms laden,
A minstrel red from out the realm of Aiden
Poured from his heart a welcome to the day.
He sang his native song and flew away;
But never a strain of Mozart, Bach or Haydn
Attuned to voice or pipe or string well played on
Could thrill the soul like that wild roundelay!

In morn of life a simple song I heard,
Sung by an untaught minstrel, blithe and free,
Which held a magic like that early bird
That charmed me with its artless melody.
Like to that bird my minstrel took his flight—
In Aiden now he hails the morning light.

Henry A. Cottell.

In a dark and dismal printer's office in this city I see a Poe-like melancholy face and figure, battling, with a poet's soul, against ghosts and demons of adversity. Like Poe, whom in appearance he so much resembled, Charles J. O'Malley sang all the sweeter as the wolf howled at his door; and with his body shivering from the bleak winds of poverty and distress, he kept his heart warm with sympathy and encouragement for all sincere strugglers in the literary world. Through the columns of *The Midland Review*, which paper afforded him the scantiest living he hailed and welcomed every line of verse that he believed was true; and many fortune-kissed writers of the South and West today must forever bless the pen of Charles J. O'Malley. Whilst

hanging upon the cross, he burst forth into glorious melody and smiled rays of hope into the discouraged hearts of other singers. Like Cawein, his friend, and like all true men of genius, he was generous in recognizing tributes to the art of others. His sorrow made him not sour, but mellow, and all the more faithful to poetry, which like Cawein, he adored.

When I think of the sublime self-sacrificing work of Charles J. O'Malley, the tenderly true lines of another genuine Kentucky poet occur to me. They are the lyrical thoughts of one who is also sincerely devoted to art, and who, too, is as generous as she is gifted, and who, by means of her brilliant literary reviews, has done much to encourage struggling writers—Anna Logan Hopper:

SONG AND SORROW

O song I made to ease my heart
So long ago,
How could such sorrow turn to art.
I do not know.

I can not now recall the pain,
It is so long;
I can not bring it back again,
Even with the song.

Anna Logan Hopper.

A brilliant assemblage of musicians, artists and writers, illuminating a music room in an apartment of this city, appear vividly before me now, and I see a salon like that of the famous Madam Adam of Paris, and, of earlier days in France, like that of Madam DeStael—presided over by one of the most fascinating characters that ever graced the environs of Louisville. This hostess was not only famous as a critic of music, but also for having been the soul-confidant, loyal friend and biographer of Louis Moreau Gottschalk, composer of the immortal "Last Hope." Madam Octavia Hensel had been for many years instructress to the children of the Archduke Charles of Austria and lady-in-waiting at the Austrian court, and while in Vienna had been the friend and associate of Hans Mackart, the artist, Eduard Strauss, the waltz king, and many celebrities in the world of music and letters. I can well understand how Eduard Strauss, in an interview with a local newspaper reporter, could have made this pertinent remark: "Madam Octavia Hensel! What a brilliant woman! It is worth a visit to Louisville just to have a conversation with her; I knew her in Vienna."

Hewett Green, Madison Cawein and others were shining members of the salon coterie of Madam Hensel. Green declared to me that

Octavia Hensel was undoubtedly the most fascinating woman that he had ever come in contact with, and he had met many fascinating personalities while living in Paris and other cities abroad.

Once more I hear that generous flow of DeStael-like wit and of information and knowledge born of deepest study and experience; again I see those wonderful, luminous eyes that seemed to be penetrating one's very soul and discovering the most concealed secrets there; that would distinguish at once the true from the false and readily perceive pure gold; eyes which even the shrewdest would not attempt to deceive, the flashes of which cast spells almost hypnotic. But as she speaks and smiles and paints enchanting word pictures of scenes along the way of her marvelous and romantic career, I see the form of Louis Moreau Gottschalk standing beside her, unfolding the depth of his soul to her; and I see her inspiring him with her sympathy into the sweetest notes ever heard by this world. Gottschalk—delicate, melancholy, sensitive—understood by her alone. And I think of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata," the divisions of which she compares to his life, in her rhapsodic biography of him which is truly a poem in prose, like Gottschalk's music, tropical, glorious with rich color, a rare memorial to a rare and beautiful soul.

In the midst of the bright firelight of her entrancing conversation a vision arises of her kneeling in devout worship before the altars of music and art, and taking the oath of self-sacrifice and fidelity unto death. And I see her, in that vision, living but for the one purpose —misunderstood, as all the faithful are misunderstood by the world —playing a part, perhaps, at times, in order to be true and to attain her lofty, unselfish ends—to bring other worshippers to the altars which she so loved. So, with the memory of Gottschalk, like a guiding star, always before her, Octavia Hensel spoke, taught and wrote music and art almost to the last hours of her long, inspiring life. I shall always remember her most forcibly as Cawein and I found her one day, kissing her pen, and saying: "This is all that I have to live for— my pen, my pen, my pen; without my pen, life is nothing, nothing."

A fairy-like form and personality comes tripping before me now, the very presence of her casts dream-spells of ethereal regions and of flowers, music and angels, and of all that is sweet and dainty in the world of song. This poet is Annie Chase Deppen, whose lyrical words sounded like the tinkling of fairy bells. Her exquisite fancies brightened the pages of many a Southern and Eastern magazine, and they could have gracefully danced or sighed with the waves of music. But no song that she ever poured forth could be more melodious than was the melody of her own entrancing nature, which charmed all who ever knew her and made them love her. Her voice, said Cawein, was itself music and her face a poem.

There are those whose lightest presence warms and cheers our natures; there are those whose far-off footsteps chill our bones.

To the former class belonged two poets who were friends to each other, as well as to Madison Cawein—Isaac T. Woodson and William F. Wood.

There was always about Mr. Woodson a lofty air of peace—such peace as glorifies a mountain height. He seemed to be ever soaring above the agitation of the world, as though inspired with an illumined realization of the littleness of all in life but what was genuine—that alone which can never die. No matter what troubled spirit might be possessing me, as soon as I drew near to Isaac Woodson its mastery at once subsided; for, as he looked at me with that wonderfully calm and restful expression, it seemed as though the pure light of the heavens were falling upon me, which always tells me not to fear or worry, for all is well—all is well—"God's in His Heaven—all's right with the world." He had a way of lifting up his hands when saluting passersby, as though he were conferring a benediction. In my heart I always believed that was what he was instinctively doing—for the very breath of his soul was love and charity for all mankind and its continuous message,—"And on earth peace, good will toward men." His verse was rich with the blue sky tints of his personality, and cast the same sweet spell of lofty rest as he himself.

Incarnation of gentle profundity, poet and philosopher at once, the hand-grasp of William F. Wood was sympathy itself—sympathy, born of poetic wisdom, that cannot help but share the joys and sorrows of others, whether it will or no, for it pierces through all the curtains of life and feels what is going on behind the scenes, and thus cannot condemn, but only pity. Of a nature deeply venerative and religious, entirely free from all worldly design, William F. Wood gave utterance to the meditations of his pure, devoted soul, and the shrine of poetry never had more sincere or unselfish offerings than his. One of his poems appealed particularly to his friend, Cawein, as it also does to me:

If Love Should Die

If love should die, and we remain
    But quickened dust;
What would the great round world contain
    In which to trust?

If Christ should pass, his life grow dim,
    Would you still pray,
His glory, all gone out with Him,
    On earth to stay?

I know not what the world may think,
    But I would then
Rather oblivious waters drink
    Than live with men.

William F. Wood.

Madison Cawein

In the world of art there is no such thing as division between the visible and invisible. Madison Cawein and his interesting group of literary friends, who are no longer with us in material form, are associated as tenderly as ever with the circle of writers who were Cawein's friends, and who are still shining, as they struggle along on this plane below, some of whom it is my kindly fortune to know, such as Dr. Henry A. Cottell, Anna Blanche McGill, Mrs. Elvira Sydnor Miller Slaughter, Charles Hamilton Musgrove, Henry Coolidge Semple, Leigh Gordon Giltner, Mrs. Alicia K. VanBuren, Otto A. Rothert, Margaret Steele Anderson, Edwin Carlisle Litsey, Ingram Crockett, Lucien V. Rule and Will H. Field. Another is Mrs. Evelyn Snead Barnett, the novelist and literary critic, who is as brilliant as she is magnanimous and always sincere in her devotion to art. Then there is Cale Young Rice, who, since the death of America's great nature poet, ranks as the State's most noted of the living poets.

John Wilson Townsend wrote the first true and satisfactory biographical sketch of his friend Madison Cawein, and is now at work on a life of the poet. [Mr. Townsend was then, 1916, seriously considering the writing of a book on Mr. Cawein.] Thanks to Mr. Townsend, and also to Mr. Rothert, Kentucky literature will forever shine on the pages of history, and the shades of many neglected Kentucky writers arise from their tombs of oblivion and call them blessed.

To me the very utterance of the name of Dr. Henry A. Cottell conjures forth all that is beautiful and idealistic in loyal, poetic friendship; all that is glowingly sincere in love and worship of art, he paying his tribute to poetry in the form of sonnets, which in artistic perfection are surpassed by none of our day. A published volume of his sonnets would make a priceless addition to the wealth of American literature and bring joy to the hearts of all true lovers of the classics; especially would his sonnet, "De Profundis," in memory of Madison Cawein, which is a masterpiece glittering with jewels:

De Profundis

In Memory of Madison Cawein

Out of the deep the stricken Psalmist cried,
When his vexed heart was like the troubled sea;
Thus did he sound the soul's profundity
And take reprisal of its mighty tide.
O thou whose bark life's restless waves did ride
And found no friendly port to welcome thee,
Thou hadst reprisal of Infinity
In sorrow's saddest, deepest strains—and died.

Job cursed the day that marked his wretched birth;
Thy natal day did mark thee with a curse.
The patriarch found peace at length on earth,
Whilst thou, who hadst small guerdon here, and worse,
The martyr's pang of unrequited worth,
Hast won the poet's crown, immortal verse.

Henry A. Cottell.

Even as Dr. Johnson had his Boswell to interpret his genius to the world, so has Madison Cawein his Dr. Cottell, who, not only during the lifetime of his devoted and illustrious poet friend, but as faithfully after his death, has acted as a zealous missionary in making known and creating interest in his poetry far and wide. Many who were indifferent to the works of Cawein became, through the exposition of Dr. Cottell, their most enthusiastic admirers. Like all geniuses and the truly great, Dr. Cottell is as generous and modest as he is gifted, and spreads the light of his brilliant intellect not realizing the blessing he is conferring. I hear, when I think of him, the delightful splashing of a ceaselessly flowing fountain, the waters of which sparkle with inspiring information and knowledge of art.

The name of Anna Blanche McGill, like that of Dr. Cottell, invokes visions of all that is loyal and golden in friendship and art. Cawein never spoke of her except in terms of enthusiasm and admiration, not only as one whose friendship is highly valued, but as one who understood, as few others could, the real undercurrent meanings of his poetry. He had the most profound appreciation of her Minerva-like opinions of verse and prose, and he would quote her criticisms with the same tender fervor that he would passages from favorite authors. He welcomed every published line of her pen, and was always the first to speak of it and praise it to others. Again and again I have met him on the street with an armful of newspapers and magazines, and his words of greeting would be to open the pages of one of the magazines, and, with glowing eyes, point exultingly to an article or poem of Anna Blanche McGill.

Friendship in any form at all is beautiful—one of the most beautiful things in this world; it is particularly so when it exists between poets; but when it exists, not only between their personalities, but also between the spirits of their pens, it wears celestial colors. Such was the friendship between Madison Cawein and Dr. Cottell, and between Madison Cawein and Anna Blanche McGill; and together they knelt, as they still do kneel, before the altars of poetry and art.

It seems to me that the soul of every true poet is reflected in at least one of his poems—his muse, as it were, making a nestling place there. The muse of Anna Blanche McGill has chosen for that purpose "The Eternal Builder," published in *The Bellman* a year or two ago. It is a tribute to eternal beauty. . . .

Madison Cawein

The Eternal Builder

Once on such an eve as this,
Once in just such golden air,
Tyre and Troy and Babylon
Soared triumphantly and fair.

Tyre so fallen, Troy turned ashes,
Babylon superb no more—
Splendors, dead, alas, the sundowns
Burnished wondrously of yore.

Ah, but still Immortal Beauty
Seeks new cities to illume—
Lo, on yonder roofs and casements,
How her gold flame-roses bloom. . . .

Fashioned of her dreams eternal,
Who knows what fair towns arise,
Lifting now immortal columns
'Neath what other evening skies.

Nay, on such a golden evening
More than fanciful desire
Seems it that earth's mortal builders
Deathless beauty may inspire:

May some day so take their spirits,
Hands and brain may so enthrall,
As some perfect grace infuses
Column, spandril, arch and wall,

Till on such a golden evening,
None shall sigh to look upon
Fair new cities and remember
Tyre and Troy and Babylon.

Anna Blanche McGill.

Elvira Sydnor Miller Slaughter. She sings every mood of the human heart and warbles sweet strains of charity for the foibles of mankind. No matter whether her writings be in verse or prose, they always are melodious, for her pen but gives expression to the voice of her nature, which is one bubbling stream of poetry. Like Will S. Hays, who was her friend, inspiration comes to her from life itself, and there is no sorrow, joy or weakness of humanity with which she is not familiar; and her deep, broad, sympathetic knowledge of

the world makes us laugh, dream, weep, just as she will by powers magical, in her *Songs of the Heart*, a book of poems; *The Tiger's Daughter and Other Stories*, delightful fairy tales, and *Confessions of a Tattler*, as well as in her numerous contributions to newspapers and magazines, many of which are treasured in family records and scrapbooks as being among the precious trinkets of the home.

Charles Hamilton Musgrove, or, rather, "Mus," as he is familiarly and fondly called by his many friends of all classes and conditions of society (and I can conceive of no newspaper man or poet more beloved than he is by not only the members of his own profession, but by everyone that knows him) was another loyal and congenial friend and companion of Madison Cawein, who was always outspoken in recognition and praise of his genius, and compared his muse to that of Edgar Allen Poe. Cawein was delighted with Musgrove's personality, which was that of a thorough Bohemian in all the charming meaning of that word; for Cawein loved Bohemianism and Bohemians—they were always nearest and dearest to his heart. It was, in fact, through Cawein that I met Musgrove. Cawein had an unselfish pleasure in introducing to each other people that he liked or was interested in, and his words of introduction paved an easy way for further acquaintance and friendship. Musgrove was at that time a reporter for a daily newspaper; he is now writing the editorial paragraphs of the *Louisville Times*.

My first impression of him was, as it still is and ever will be, that he was the incarnation of wild, uncontrollable genius itself, which, even as the bird, it knows not why, must sing. That is, in fact, the height of genius—when one cannot help but give expression to the language of his soul, not knowing why or wherefore, and without a purpose of his own; sublime helplessness under the power of a muse or inspiration, call it what you like. Such is the poetic genius of Musgrove, whose volumes of verse, *Pan and Æolus* (dedicated to Madison Cawein), and *The Dream Beautiful, and Other Poems*, are filled with the grand sacred sorrow of unrest, with which every nature that looks above worldly things for peace is filled; such glorious natures as created a "Faust," "Ode to a Skylark" and "Paradise Lost," emitting pure breaths of yearning for life higher and afar, even as they pour forth the soul-deep tragedies of life; and such is the poetry of Musgrove. It will give him immortality, whether he cares for it or not, and even though he never writes another line.

Henry Coolidge Semple and Will H. Field—now Judge Field—started out in life as newspaper writers and poets, but have apparently thrown their pens away; only apparently, for I feel that such true and genuine poetic natures as theirs will some day be overcome by the wooing of the muses they deserted, and that Will H. Field, like Walter Malone, of Tennessee—who was loved and admired both as judge and poet, but whose verse gave him widespread fame—will yet

be best remembered for his exquisite lyrics, which Madison Cawein so much admired and so loudly praised. [Walter Malone dedicated one of his books—*Songs of the North and South*, 1900—to Madison Cawein.]

Henry Coolidge Semple, when I first knew him, was the editor of a little struggling newspaper with which Musgrove and I were also associated. Its small scantily furnished office was located in a central place of the city—a place of rendezvous for all Bohemian spirits. I never heard of any rent being paid for the office. We made ourselves busy—the only time we ever did make ourselves busy—in locking and barricading the door of the room and in keeping ominously silent when we suspected a visit from the rent collector; and we kept our shivering bodies from freezing by borrowing kindling and coal—which loan was never settled—from the Salvation Army, which at that time, had headquarters in the building. If any revenue did ever come into the office it was too little to be divided and was quickly transformed into a beverage to preserve the life of our Bohemian spirits.

Madison Cawein was a frequent and delighted visitor to our little Bohemian office, which savored so much, he said, of the Latin Quarter of Paris. He heartily enjoyed the wild, unrestrained flow of the spirits of the personalities that congregated there, some of whom were not only ragged in purse and clothes, but, I must confess, somewhat in morals as well. Cawein did not hesitate to contribute an occasional poem to the paper, and several of Musgrove's and Semple's appeared in its columns, too. Cawein compared Semple's Western dialect verse to that of Eugene Field, and was particularly pleased with "Doc," dedicated to Dr. Harris Kelly, of this city, and "Hank," both published in the book of verse entitled *Hank, and Other Poems.*

Otto A. Rothert, the historian, whose *History of Muhlenberg County* Cawein declared is "as fascinating as fiction," and which received unsparing praise from the most fastidious critics in this country, was, as he is still, a most loyal and enthusiastic friend of our poet and his poetry. Mr. Rothert is the only person who owns a complete autographed collection of Cawein's published works. He also has a large and unique collection of autographed books of a number of other Kentucky authors, many of whom are his warmest friends.

The last prolonged visit to Kentucky scenes of nature was made by Cawein to Muhlenberg County, a few weeks before his death, as the guest of Mr. Rothert and in company with Young E. Allison, the author of "The Derelict," a poem which Cawein considered one of the best ever written by an American. Cawein's face was illumined with enthusiasm as he related to me an account of his trip which he said was one of the most delightful he had ever taken in his life, and he informed me that it was his intention to try to write an epic, the scenes of which would lie in Kentucky, and some of them in Muhlenberg County.

Mr. Rothert possesses the rare gift of making history romantic; he can make the dullest subjects interesting and brilliant with color. He is an indefatigable digger among the mines of the past, never failing to find and share with the reading world priceless gems and minerals hitherto unknown and undiscovered. He is at present zealously engaged on an early history of the Cave-in-Rock outlaws and the flatboatmen of the Ohio, every line of which I am sure will be true and also thrilling.

The prose of Leigh Gordon Giltner is as vigorous and graphic as that of Kipling. She is one of the most successful of short story writers of the day, but I prefer to think of her as the author of the tender, sympathetic and lyrical volume of poems, *The Path of Dreams*, which will give her the more lasting fame.

As Thought is Led, and *Fireflies*, of Alicia K. Van Buren, make me dream of the plaintive songs and melodies of Schubert and Schumann. The last visit I made to Cawein's apartment at St. James Court, in the autumn of the year in which he died, was on the occasion of a reception given to a few of his literary friends, in honor of Mrs. Van Buren. Cawein and Dr. Cottell read from *Fireflies*, then just published. Mrs. Cawein, beautiful and gifted, read in her inimitable way passages from Irish plays; and there was an expression of pleasure and happiness on the face of Cawein that evening that I can never forget.

Lucien V. Rule is a philosopher, minister of the gospel, humanitarian and poet. I always look upon him as missionary, expressing his messages to the world in verse. He is like unto the prophets of old, voicing, in inspired, melodious language, visions of the light. He is a leader among men; Socialist, in the true sense of the term, denouncing wrong and singing of the kingdom of eternal love—love which, one day, alone must reign. His nature is as pure and beautiful as is the tone of his verse, and as lofty, clear, ethereal and soaring.

Edwin Carlisle Litsey, like Leigh Gordon Giltner, has achieved an enviable success as a writer of stories. He will be best and longest remembered, however, by his lately published volume of strong, genuine, melodious, heart-touching poems, *Spindrift*.

And then there is another of Cawein's friends, Ingram Crockett —a poet, whether he writes in verse or prose—poet of nature and of the human heart, whom sorrow has enriched with the glorious starlight of life's night, which inspires his muse to sing all the sweeter; for Art is the daughter of Soul and Sorrow, and to reach heights we must first have touched depths.

And so I think of them always—of Madison Cawein and these faithful Kentucky friends of his—kneeling together at the feet of Poetry and Art; some in the midst of sunlight, some in the midst of shadows; some in one world, some in another; some offering tributes more brilliant than others, but all of pure gold—the only gold that is of value in all the realms of eternity—the priceless gold of sincerity.

XIII

REMINISCENCES OF CAWEIN

By Eleven of His Associates

Written in 1920

Madison Cawein II, Anna Blanche McGill,
Reuben Post Halleck, Leigh Gordon Giltner,
Elvira S. Miller Slaughter, Henry A. Cottell,
Young E. Allison, Henry Van dyke,
Charles Hamilton Musgrove, George Lee Burton,
Henry H. Koehler.

By Madison Cawein II

Louisville, Kentucky

When my father died I was ten years old; I am now sixteen. Many of my recollections of him are vague, others are somewhat clear. I shall attempt to re-tell some of those that impressed me most. The characteristic that stands out foremost in my recollections of my father is that he was always gentle and kind-hearted toward me and my mother, and toward all others, young and old, with whom he came in contact.

My grandmother tells me that in my infancy when I was turned over to my father to be rocked to sleep he took me in his arms and read aloud poems from a magazine or book. He would half read and half sing them in such a way that they had the effect of a cradle song. My bed time was 7:30, but I do not recall how old I was when that hour was first set, nor when it was discontinued. I do recall, however, that nearly every night my father told me stories or read fairy tales to me until I was sent to bed. He did this, I think, with the intention of developing my imagination.

I feel that some of my early recollections of my father are confused with those of my mother and grandmother, Mrs. Anna M. McKelvey. It may be well to add that Mrs. McKelvey is my mother's step-mother. She is about eight years older than my mother. She and my mother were more like sisters or chums than mother and daughter. From my birth down to the time of my mother's death I was looked after by my grandmother about as much as I was by my mother. I now live with grandmother McKelvey and she is in a sense a mother to me. No real mother could be more loving and devoted to a son than grandmother McKelvey.

When I was about three years of age my parents made their first visit to Mr. and Mrs. Eric Pape in Massachusetts. I went with them. The Papes then lived at Annisquam, but later moved to Manchester-by-the-Sea. I remember during one of our later visits strolling through the woods and along the coast, how interested father was in an old mill, some old huts and the old forest trees and how he enjoyed his trips in Mr. Pape's yacht. Moritz Pape, a boy about my age, frequently accompanied us on these walks and rides. The dilapidated old mill in the neighborhood was one of our favorite stopping places. My father often told us ghost stories about the place and said if we would come down any dark night and look through the cracks of the floor and listen we would find the white miller at work and hear the machinery. I have a distinct recollection of the early morning walks we took with the Papes, and the berries we gathered and the apples we picked along the wayside. Father always plucked a few flowers and never failed to give me one with a remark to the effect that it grew in a garden cared for by the fairies.

He and I often went to Jacob Park and Kenwood Hill—two of his favorite haunts. I have sat with him there in the shade of a tree and heard him relate stories about his boyhood or tell me fanciful tales about some of the places then within our sight. One day we were sitting on the brink of a small valley in which there were a number of gullies and other barren places that appeared to be formations of baked clay. The small hills in the vicinity showed naked spots of the same character. I do not recall the location of the place, but the stories he told regarding it interested me greatly. He said it was an extinct volcano and that an Indian village once stood there and had been destroyed by an eruption. He gave me a glowing account of a great battle some Indians had fought and how the medicine men applied roots and herbs to the wounded, and how while the warriors were preparing for another battle an eruption destroyed the village and exterminated the two tribes.

He loved to walk through old graveyards and other so-called haunted places and tell me stories about them. I have a vague recollection of visiting one small old graveyard a number of times. I think it is on Kenwood Hill. The graves were sunken, the crude stones

dilapidated and the entire place covered with more or less brush. He wandered around in it as though looking for a certain headstone, and in the meantime told me the story of the dead man's life and how his ghost came back and haunted the places in which he had done good or bad deeds while alive. All these stories made a great impression upon me. I would think of the Indian battles and the haunted places for many days, ask questions and discuss some of the details with him. I, of course, did not suspect that these tales were made up for my amusement.

Often he sat on the grass and wrote in his note book while I played around under a nearby tree or in a brook. He knew every bird, bee and flower and pointed out many of them and told me their names. No matter how occupied he was he seemed aware of the presence of certain birds. "Where is that red bird?" he would ask; and it pleased him very much to watch me looking for it, and if I succeeded in locating it he was delighted.

The stories I remember best pertain to the time when my father was a boy living in Oldham County, Kentucky, near the Babbits, and in Indiana on the Knobs near New Albany.

When my father was about nine years old grandfather Cawein had charge of a hotel known as Rock Springs, a resort in Oldham County. Not far from the hotel were Babbit's Mill and the Babbit home. The mill was an old water mill and was seldom operated. My father said that he and some of the other boys tried to outdo each other in the telling of ghost stories. One afternoon they decided to go down to the mill that very night and see for themselves whether or not there really were such things as ghosts. They asked Mr. Babbit to go with them, and he said he would. They later called for him to accompany them, but he could not be found and so the boys went to the mill alone. When they arrived at the old mill they began to doubt the safety of entering it. They felt that talking during the day about going into the old place was quite a different matter from actually going into it at night.

After some delay and daring they summoned enough courage to walk in. They found their way through the various rooms and looked around as best they could in the dark. Soon a vague sound reached their ears; this rapidly changed to a louder moan and a clanking of chains. They made their way through the dark toward the entrance as quickly as possible. When they emerged from the last room they looked through the fallen-in-floor into the old water wheel room below. The noise became more distinct, and suddenly they saw beneath them something white moving to and fro. It came toward them. They grabbed chunks of wood lying around and threw them in self defense at the white object. A succession of startled cries came from the white thing and soon the boys discovered that it was calling for them to stop their attacks. "Hey, there," cried the voice

from below, "Stop it, boys, I'm no ghost; I'm Mr. Babbit; I was just fooling you." This frightened the boys more than ever. They rushed from the mill, over a field, and up a hill, and not until they got home did they realize that Mr. Babbit was the "ghost" and that he had gone to the mill prepared, knowing they intended to search the place for ghosts.

Tradition had it, so my father said, that a whole family had been murdered in the house near New Albany into which grandfather Cawein moved when my father was a boy of about ten years and that the victims had been buried under an apple tree standing in the corner of the orchard. One night my grandmother not being able to sleep, and stirred by an irresistible impulse, went to the window and looked out, and what did she see but two ghosts dancing under the corner tree in the orchard. She called for grandfather, but before he or any of the others reached the window, the ghosts were gone.

On another night, under similar circumstances, my grandmother rose and looking out of the window saw a white horse, with a long white mane and tail, dashing over the hills in the distance. In the same neighborhood there lived a farmer who owned a number of fine horses. One day shortly after my grandmother had seen the white horse, this man stopped at grandfather's front gate, got off his horse and transacted the business for which he had come. When he was ready to leave he found that his horse would not move. The beast stood trembling, with its eyes fixed on the corner tree in the orchard. They tried to coax the animal to pass the tree, for it stood near the road he intended to take; but all efforts failed. It was only by leading the horse in the opposite direction that the man succeeded in getting him away. Although he tried he was never again able to ride this horse near the house or the orchard.

About this time my father and his brothers and some of their boy friends became very much interested in treasure seeking. They searched the old haunted houses in their neighborhood without success. One day they decided to explore their own cellar. They took a pick and shovel and a candle and descended into the unexplored region. The cellar had not been used for a number of years. Immediately after all had landed at the bottom of the steps, the candle went out. This frightened the boys, and when from out the darkness they saw two great, green eyes staring at them, a panic ensued and all made a rush for the steps. My father was the last in line and realizing there was nothing between him and the shining eyes, he was almost too frightened to move. He managed to run up the steps, and after he got out they slammed the cellar door and bolted it, and never again did any of them try to find hidden treasures in an abandoned cellar.

My father told me many stories. He had interesting ones for all occasions—Hallowe'en, Christmas, Easter, etc.—and for nearly

every kind of bird, butterfly, flower and tree; for the sun, moon and stars and for all kinds of weather. I distinctly remember that he read some of his poems to me when I was very small, and now going over his *The Giant and the Star* I vaguely identify some of these child poems as the ones he read to me before they were published.

As years roll on, my recollections of my trips to the parks with my father, my life at home when he and my mother were alive, and even the stories he told me may fade from my memory, but I am confident that my recollection of my father's love for me and my love for him will remain vivid until the end.

By Reuben Post Halleck

Louisville, Kentucky

I came to the Louisville Male High School to teach in September, 1883, and I had the good fortune to be closely associated with Madison J. Cawein for three years of his school life. I remember almost as distinctly as if it were yesterday the delight which Cawein took in studying Hale's *Longer English Poems* under me in the school year of 1883-84. He was then a sophomore in the Louisville Male High School. The entire class was of excellent caliber, but he stood easily first in his appreciation of poetry.

When we came to Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," Cawein's delight was almost unbounded in that romantic poem. The mystery of the sea, of the "fog-smoke white," of the "ice mast high" that came "floating by," of the "moving moon" that "went up the sky and nowhere did abide;" the beauty of the creatures of the sea, "blue, glossy green, and velvet black;" the coming of the tropic night when:

> "The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
> At one stride comes the dark;"

the realization of how beautiful God had made his creatures—

> "O happy living things, no tongue
> Their beauty might declare"—

until Cawein could say with the Mariner:

> "A spring of love gushed from my heart,
> And I blessed them unaware!"—

all these enchanted young Cawein and made him resolve to become a poet. He then showed me lines of his own which reflected the

beauty of the "Ancient Mariner." It was a delight for me to see his poetic soul bud and blossom so rapidly under the spring showers of the master poets.

The single poem in Hale's which then affected him most profoundly was "The Eve of St. Agnes," by John Keats. Cawein turned teacher and called to my attention the poetic beauty of such expressions as "azure-lidded sleep," "the tiger moth's deep-damasked wings," "blanched linen smooth and lavendered," "the music yearning like a god in pain," "the silver snarling trumpets" which "'gan to chide."

I asked Cawein to come to see me out of school hours and read to me the passages from "The Eve of St. Agnes" that pleased him most. He read fully half the poem. I remember that he read the first stanza slowly three times and said that he wished he were an artist so that he could put that stanza on canvas. The romantic legend of the poem charmed him. When Madeline, its heroine, retired in the castle on the Eve of St. Agnes, confident that Porphyro, the hero, would be hers if she saw his face in a dream on that prophetic night—Cawein was enchanted as he read me the story. The tremolo came to his voice when he read the lines telling how Porphyro, after gaining admission to the castle, was bending over the sleeping Madeline at the instant that he appeared in her dream. Then in ecstasy Cawein read of her awakening:

> "Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
> Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
> Into her dream he melted, as the rose
> Blendeth its odor with the violet
> Solution sweet."

It has been easy for me to trace the influence of Keats in general and of this poem in particular in much of Cawein's poetry. Keats was a great artist in the use of poetic words and one of Cawein's temperament could have had no better master. Poets are known by their adjectives and verbs. Such adjectives as "scarlet-haunted" in the lines:

> Beyond the light that would not die
> Out of the scarlet-haunted sky.

show that Cawein was an apt pupil of Keats.

Cawein was the first and only member of a graduating class in my more than a quarter of a century association with the Louisville Male High School to have an original poem for his commencement address. It was my duty to select and train the speakers. I remember how well he acquitted himself on that June night in 1886 when he made his first public appearance as a poet before a Louisville audience.

After his school days were finished I often tramped with Cawein over Iroquois Park and the adjacent forests and hills south of Louisville. The nature of this region appears again and again in his verse. A path about three-eighths of a mile long on the southeastern side of Iroquois Park hill is known as the Cawein Walk. Lovers of his poetry ought to petition the Board of Park Commissioners to have the sign "Cawein Walk" posted at the northern and southern entrance of this Walk. He wrote some of his best spring poetry sitting on the secluded stone steps in the middle part of this Walk, which looks toward Kenwood Hill and the more distant heights southeast of Louisville. The Cawein Trail is a different haunt of his. This is a trail through the dense beech forest southwest of Iroquois Park. While he was sitting on a log spanning a brook in this forest, he heard the "stealthy twilight's tread," and then the "far off, far off woe of whippoorwill, of whippoorwill." This experience suggested one of his best poems, "The Whippoorwill." I have often walked over this trail with Cawein and I know that its associations thrilled him and reappeared in his poetry.

Cawein revealed to prosaic mortals the magic in the common things of nature, the "clover-sweetened slope," the "wild-wood limbs," the "stealthy twilight's tread." Good poetry has in it the essence of immortality. Cawein will be remembered long after those of us who write prose are forgotten.

By Elvira S. Miller Slaughter

Louisville, Kentucky

As I sit by the river this late afternoon, where the delicate scent of the sweet fern is blown about me, I am thinking of the dear companion who once sat with me here; that friend for whom, throughout the long years of our friendship, I never had to offer an apology nor a defense. He was to me as Horatio was to Hamlet, and I feel that I "shall never look upon his like again."

I had corresponded with Madison Cawein for about a year before meeting him personally, but from the beginning I felt as if I had known him all my life. When I first made his acquaintance he lived in the big brick house at Nineteenth and Market streets. There was a large yard on the eastern side of the residence. It was always gay with old-fashioned flowers, many of which he has woven into his songs. His home was a comfortable one, and he was devoted to it.

At this time, the Cawein household was composed of Dr. and Mrs. William Cawein, parents of the poet, his brothers, Charles, John and Will, his sister Lilian and his cousins, Rose and Fred Cawein. Will and Fred were gifted artists. On the occasions of my

visits to the Cawein home, Madison would come for me and escort me there. On some of the afternoons we would drink to his success, sipping a golden-hued wine which his father had made from grapes grown on their little farm near Jeffersontown.

We used to have a lot of fun teasing the young poet about his habit of waylaying the postman every day in order to be able to secure his rejected manuscripts unknown to the members of the household, and thereby avoid their banter. They found him out, however, and he took their jests at his expense with great good humor, knowing that they were hoping he would gain, sooner or later, a wide recognition.

Some of the Cawein family were believers in Spiritualism. Madison regarded his mother as a wonderfully gifted medium. Everything savoring of the weird, the uncanny and the supernatural appealed to the poet, but he professed his interest only to his intimate friends.

He loved to frequent old grass-grown cemeteries, especially the one located at Seventeenth and Jefferson streets, where, in those days, the vaults were approached by steps leading to their entrances. We often went to this romantic old city of the dead and walked among the tombs, or descended into the vaults, where the time-worn caskets of all sizes were ranged upon shelves. He would muse on the histories of the dead, on their loves and hates; and, like the French poet, would exclaim sadly, "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" His poem "Gloramone" was inspired by visits to this place, and was written shortly after he had read "La Morte Amoureuse," of Gautier. This cemetery is described in many of his poems. He found inspiration there which he could not find in Cave Hill, where, he declared, the beauty was too artificial and formal for his taste.

I do not recall in all the years I knew him, that Mr. Cawein expressed a belief in any creed. He was one of the purest and most reverent men I ever knew. He was a Pantheist at heart and loved beauty even as Keats and Shelley loved it; and, in his fancy he saw radiant forms and faces in the woods and fields; all the lost gods of old returned to welcome him and be with him along the forest ways.

I never knew a more prodigious reader than Mr. Cawein. He took delight in Flaubert, Gautier, Zola, DeMaupassant and Rousseau; but, strange to relate, he rarely read the French poets, or shared in the least my fondness for Beronger or DeMusset.

Tennyson was his idol for a time, and it was then that Mr. Cawein wrote "Accolon of Gaul" (1888) which, he once told me, touched upon his own youth. Later on he became infatuated with Browning, and this enthusiastic admiration made him an unconscious imitator of the English genius whose poem, "The Laboratory," Mr. Cawein revived (about 1890) in his own dramatic effort, "His First Mistress." Another literary work which charmed him was the unrevised edition

of "Arabian Nights." He did not seem to care for practical works, for history, nor for the average novel. I do not believe he ever took any real pleasure in reading the prose stories of his warm friend, William Dean Howells. He delighted, however, in the genius of his friends, James Lane Allen, John Fox, Junior, Robert Burns Wilson, Charles J. O'Malley, Ingram Crockett, Cale Young Rice, Leigh Gordon Giltner, Lucien V. Rule, Robert E. Lee Gibson, Walter Malone, Bert Finck, Anna Blanche McGill, Young E. Allison, James Whitcomb Riley and others in the Middle West who belonged to his singers of the Table Round. They were his friends through life and their friendship with him was as beautiful as it was enduring.

Mr. Cawein made many good friends and lost none of them. He loved women; they inspired him as flowers and music charmed his soul. Among his best friends were women; however, not one of them, in my opinion, ever felt for him any other affection save the brooding, protecting tenderness given by a mother or sister. There was something of the child about him always; yet while we all felt he would do finer work when he had grown older and had been tried by suffering and loss, we could not bear the thought of the necessity of any shadows falling on his heart, or financial worries thronging about his door.

He was ever loyal. He had no petty jealousies of others, but delighted in their successes. If Mr. Cawein ever spoke unfavorably of another's poem, his criticism was devoid of envy or malice. I recall when I was on the staff of the Louisville *Evening Times*, he requested me to give a generous write-up on Cale Young Rice, whose book *Song Surf* was shortly to appear. He highly praised Mr. Rice and his work. So it was with other writers; he made special efforts to have their poetry praised by the press if he thought it worthy.

At this early stage of our acquaintance, Mr. Cawein was a clerk in the Newmarket, a pool room operated by the late Anderson M. Waddill and Joe T. Burt. Mr. Burt was a great admirer of the poet, and although no judge of literature and not much of a reader, he, nevertheless, read many of Mr. Cawein's poems and seemed particularly fond of "To A Wind-Flower." He always spoke of Madison as "Mad," abbreviating his name in that fashion. When Mr. Cawein married, Mr. Burt gave him a handsome wedding gift. Mr. Cawein disliked the pool room; it was a handicap to him socially also. On more than one occasion when I asked permission of some appreciative persons to introduce him, and added that the poet worked in the Newmarket, they threw up their hands in horror and exclaimed: "Oh, how awful! Urge your gifted friend to leave that place and then you may bring him to call on us." It was his salary at the Newmarket, however, that enabled him to bring out his first books. Mr. Cawein was never one of those who kick away the ladder by which they climb.

In the early years of our friendship we used to set aside Sunday evenings for our meetings, and frequently on Sunday afternoons we roamed through the West End and down to where the Ohio flows placidly by the blue Knobs on the Indiana shore. Here were the quiet fields and the banks fragrant with sweet fern; and here we often saw gorgeous sunsets. When we had the time we would drive out to their little farm near Jeffersontown, or up the Brownsboro Road, or over on the Knobs near New Albany to many of the places he pictured in his poems.

He knew each flower and tree by name, and knew their habits and their time of blossoming; whereas to me the flowers along the wayside were like pretty girls I knew by sight but not by name. We returned from our drives or rambles laden with spoils of the woodlands; in the fall with sumach, goldenrod and ironweed, and in the springtime with wild plum blossoms, snowy dogwood and ruddy blooms of the Judas tree.

Mr. Cawein believed in himself. He was most appreciative of kindness and encouragement, but would never permit any one to patronize him or take him up as a fad. When *Kentucky Poems*, the first English edition of his work, appeared he was childishly enthusiastic over the fact that the people of his native city, who had given him the scant meed of praise usually given a home poet, were asking him where they could get a copy of his published-in-England book. He smilingly told them they would have to send to London or wait until the Louisville book stores had secured a supply. He wrote me a long letter, joyous and proud, and concluded it by saying that the copy he was sending me was then the only one in the city; in fact, it was his own, the one forwarded from London by Mr. Gosse.

Our respective domestic afflictions and various other changes caused us to see each other less and less frequently as time rolled on. My mother passed away. She had always admired Mr. Cawein, and when she died he wrote me a letter in which he said he was surprised to learn that she was older than he had thought. But my mother was one of those who keep Spring in their hearts; it was this sympathy with youth that made her seem as one with persons like Mr. Cawein.

I was married in May, 1903, and Mr. Cawein in June. Dating from about that time we saw comparatively little of each other, but I never lost my interest in his literary career. When we met on the street we would pause for a chat. One afternoon about a year before he died we met by chance near Beechmont, and he invited me to join him in a walk to Iroquois Park. It was a beautiful day in the early fall and the trees and flowers had begun to take on their autumn colors. It was a jaunt into Arcady, and for both of us a return to the long ago. The cares and broken dreams of life were forgotten

as we strolled to the Park and climbed the upland path where the wind was singing among the trees and the leaves falling at our feet. From the summit of Iroquois Park we looked on the quiet fields and woodlands and on the roofs and spires of the distant city. We saw the Ohio winding by the western shores where we had so often roamed together; and a silence more eloquent than speech was ours. We lingered on the hill until the last red ray of the sun had died behind the trees and the downward path was filled with gray shadows. I feel that this, my last walk with the friend who had shared much of the sunshine of the past with me, was as a benediction on our friendship.

By Young E. Allison

Louisville, Kentucky

Summing up a familiar, friendly acquaintance—it could scarcely be called an intimate friendship—that continued for twenty-five years with Cawein, the personal quality in him that most impressed me was the perfect clarity of a childlike nature. He had some hard experiences of life, he had met and dealt with human nature in the rough and had plenty of cynical knowledge of the world, but he went through even the mire of it unspotted. After he left school he had to deal for some years with machine-like fact to earn his living, but his mind was ever fixed upon dreams and that contemplation of beauty which makes children alike to poets and poets alike to children.

Cawein's personal honesty and mental integrity were both perfect. Nobody has accused him of filching a single phrase or even of cunning adaptation. He could not pretend. All that he attained of fame was deserved and was an unconcealed delight to him as it unrolled. During the last three years of his life, when fortune deserted him, when he was hard put to it to maintain his family and himself—when he recognized that fame after all was just a bay wreath that kept nothing warm of itself—a great depression came upon him and he made no attempt to conceal it from his familiars. But he did not whine over fate. He turned manfully to fight. He thought of journalism, for which he was peculiarly unfitted; he tried writing scenarios for moving pictures, and failed; courageously he took stock of his talents and tried his hand tentatively at the cynical and flippant themes already growing popular in verse—and tore them up.

"It is the irony of fate," he said once to me when discussing his plight, "that I, who am known all over America and England, and have spent my life learning one of the highest and most prized of arts, cannot make a living at it." He said it with an amused smile. His plight did not daunt him for himself. It was his wife and child he had ever in his mind. For himself he had the makings of a splendid

vagabond who could have endured hardship with a light heart and counted it adventure. There was suffering in the thought of the others and in the realization that his poetry was an exotic upon which life could not be supported. Then there was deep sensitive pride underneath, such as all men feel but seek to deny exhibition of. He just suffered.

He never posed. When he was praised he was heartily happy. Delight shone in his eyes and in a frank smile, so radiant that it was almost laughter. Under unfavorable criticism which he felt to be sincere he would be depressed, because he had none of the overweening egotism of genius, but rather an honest confidence in himself which was yet ready to doubt whether he had succeeded merely because he had nobly tried. Insincere and superficial criticism angered him for the moment as it would a child, but he soon recovered and could laugh at it.

All his life he was a child of wonder who thrilled to see his dreams come true. The recognition of his high poetic quality by William Dean Howells and the publication of Edmund Gosse's collection of his poems in England were the two keenest thrills of his life. Both times he went to the woods to indulge his first exuberance before meeting his everyday friends. He told me so. He explained that he was afraid he might say foolish things unless he "cooled off." I was absent when the Howells appreciation appeared, but when the Gosse letter came he told me of it quickly.

"Think of it!" he said, with his radiant, boyish smile, "I'm to be published by the greatest living English critic. It is something I never even dreamed of, but oh, Lord! how I've worked for such a thing!"

By the way, the Cawein pronunciation of English was not wholly undefiled. He said, "Oh, Lard," when he meant "Oh Lord," and a corpse was ever a "carpse" to him. But he possessed a wonderful vocabulary and in polite conversation a nice sense of choosing the good word. And he would make daring use of a poet's right of ellipsis in describing things.

As are most men who are concentrated upon a single great purpose in life, Cawein was serious minded with a slant to melancholy; but he was good-humored, patient, generously tolerant. These qualities enabled him to get along well, if modestly, in society. He was never the poet there—nobody was ever called upon to burn candles before him. He had no "small talk," but was a good listener and enjoyed though he had little of the wit that passes current in conversation.

His "sense of humor" as distinguished from good humor was a lagging quality. Several months before he died he came into my office one day and laid before me the photographic facsimile of some printed verses of mine with my name signed to them.

"Did you sign this?" he asked.

"No," I said, "that's not my signature. It's a forgery."

"Well," he explained, with a little sign of disconcertion, "I signed your name myself and I hope I haven't caused you any annoyance."

It seems that several years before he had come to get a printed copy of the verses autographed for a friend at a distance. Finding that I was out of town, and the call for the autograph urgent, he had concluded to gratify his friend with "something just as good," and recalling my signature as well as he could he wrote it and sent the print back.

"I intended to tell you of it," he continued, "but I forgot, and now my friend has had it photographed and is sending copies to his friends." He seemed genuinely disturbed. I told him it was all right and that I would stand for it and make all the necessary affidavits. Then the joke of it began to amuse him. He gave me the facsimile, we labeled it "The Great Cawein Forgery" and there it is in my archives.

Cawein and James Whitcomb Riley were great admirers of each other. They were alike in that both were architects of their own poetic structures, unaided by the scholarship of schools. They were both melodists, both went straight to nature for inspiration and both succeeded. Riley's popular success was far greater because the nature he illuminated was human nature direct, while Cawein turned to Flora and thus illuminated human nature by indirection. Before he died Riley's success had made him rich and the pressure by publishers to commercialize that success permanently converted him into a sort of "institution" of which he was the central figure of Buddha, moved and served by the priests of the press. Cawein's poetry was in essence poetry for poets, Riley's for the people. Riley had a great cynical adventurous spirit and yet wrote the most artless poems. Cawein had a most artless spirit and wrote poems of great cynical knowledge. Nevertheless the very inner core of both was ingrained boyishness which is the soul of poetic genius.

Somewhere back in the early nineties they made acquaintance by exchange of books. Soon afterward Riley came down from Indianapolis to pay me a visit and try the manuscript of his *Rhymes of Childhood* upon my young son. Cawein was invited out and we spent two days loafing together. The two poets met with a little constraint based upon deep mutual respect and admiration each of the other's work. Riley was nearly twenty years the elder, with a great reputation and a reigning success on the platform. Cawein was quite respectful with something like awe of him. We went out in the crisp autumn afternoon and climbed up Iroquois Park to the table top and strolled in the woods. It happened that Riley and I had both, as boys, been emergency substitute snare drummers ("by ear") in the local

brass bands of our respective towns, and, when we met, were accustomed to recall the old band pieces and our adventures. Marches, quicksteps, polkas, we knew scores together.

So, that afternoon, walking through the deafening frou-frou of the dead leaves, Riley turned to me and rapped out, "No. 16" and then making the sound of a drum long-roll with his tongue he swung into whistling a lively quickstep. I whistled a second to his air and the rustle of the leaves made a striking accompaniment. Cawein observed it all with astonishment as if he couldn't credit the sight of a distinguished poet parading like a ten-year old boy, twiddling his fingers as if he were playing a cornet and marching proudly with head up and chest out. I don't think Cawein had much of the music of sound in him, in spite of his great sense of melody in words and rhythms, but he enjoyed the musical enjoyment of others. We sat down on a log and recalled old airs and songs, whistling or singing "Silver Lake," "The White Cockade," "Lillibulero," "Corn Rigs and Barley Rigs," "Bonnie Doon"—all that old time treasury of tunes and tears. And Cawein listened and wondered and evidently doubted if he were awake, and then smiled his slow appreciative smile. When he finally became convinced that there was another boy there in Riley he soon thawed into complete recognition, but he never was lacking in respect.

I carried on a correspondence, now regular, now desultory, with Riley for thirty years and scarcely ever after that day did he write without sending a line or a paragraph of cheer or of admiration to Cawein. They met whenever Riley came. Riley, who was apparently never disturbed in a single heartbeat by the presence of women, had a great admiration for Mrs. Cawein's full, dark beauty and invariably said when asking me about the Caweins, "Well, he's luckier as a man than any poet has a right to expect to be." Once he said to me, "It doesn't do a poet any good to live in the presence of beauty like Mad. Cawein has got in his wife. A poet has just got to make his own beauty by the sweat of his poetry. If it is there before him all the time he is in danger of forgetting how to work it out a new way every day."

Everybody who knew Cawein at all must have known how wholly devoid he was of jealousy or envy. He was always delighted with the success of others and went out of his way to encourage them. He hailed the appearance of every new poet of promise as if there could not possibly be too many of them. The nearest I ever heard him come to any expression of artistic selfishness was in his comments upon a short poem written by one of his friends who was a mere dilletante in literature. The song in question had come into great popularity with critics and readers.

"Here I have been writing poetry all my life," said Cawein, "and have published twenty books, but I haven't written a single

poem that is remembered or that can be called popular. Here this writer comes along with a few stray pieces and hits the mark with a song that will be remembered after all I have written is forgotten. But, dog-gone it! it deserves to live—I'll say that!"

And he took it upon himself to get the song included in two anthologies of verse to help it live.

We met most frequently at the magazine and newspaper counter in Dearing's old Fourth Street book store, just north of Jefferson. He kept a sharp eye on the poetry in current magazines and newspapers with a literary "corner." He was there nearly every day in the week—always on Sunday mornings. Between 10 and 12 o'clock, Sundays, you could count upon meeting there quite a circle of appreciative readers who dropped in to smell over books and magazines and to take home a roll of the latter to snatch relief from the dull afternoons and the long Sunday nights—judges, lawyers, physicians, engineers, railroad magnates and the like. All knew him and they would dicuss what to read. He was buried in poetry, but he would get his head out now and then to read novels, autobiography, memoir and history, though he confessed to me he found history pretty dull stuff except in the hands of the Abbotts or Froudes or Macaulays. "I read it," he said, "to keep from being entirely ignorant of the subject." His judgment on novels seemed to me quite unscientific. You could never discover any particular taste he had for them. The melodiousness of Stevenson and Thackeray appealed to the poetic in him, but all stories seemed alike to him. We spent many a pleasant hour there Sunday wrangling over print and expressing scorn for each other's judgment.

We almost never discussed his own poetry. I had told him from the first that I had made no study of poetry and did not presume to criticise it. It was to me only a series of pictures with splendid color lines, giving in the end the same impressions that came of the finest prose. The niceties and fittingnesses of form were quite beyond me as was the binding of a book the contents of which stirred me. He thought it a curiously careless way to view poetry. "Form, melody, rhyme and length," he said, "are the very essence of the poet's labor, and it takes a hell of a lot of hard work to get them moving together. After it is done men like you just glance over it, sneak out the honey and leave the artist's hard work unnoticed."

When I told him that I thought in his *Intimations of the Beautiful* he had come nearer than any other poet to setting the evanishing things that make up the trembling atmosphere of poetic beauty before the eyes of readers, he was glad with a fine humility that was beautiful to see. When I told him his passionate dream in "The Salamander" was as fine in melody and color as Poe's "Raven," but was marred to weakness, as "The Raven" was, by too many stanzas of mere words that diluted the splendid idea, he was dashed and sighed and said,

"Well, sometimes we don't know where to stop and just keep on like a poker-player trying to win out. Then, we hate to destroy what has cost so much thought." This song he afterward spoiled in revision.

It will be understood, of course, that Cawein was a hard worker. He loved the work, too, and while he had respect for the product of his pen he took a practical view and wrote for the market and as well tried to create his own market. "You have to sell poetry as you would potatoes," he remarked once in matter-of-fact tone.

Several years before he died he met a composer who proposed that a libretto be made of Cawein's picturesque but cruel drama, "Cabestaing," for which he would write the music. Cawein was much pleased and very willing, but frankly admitted that he had had no experience of stage preparation and came to propose to me collaboration with them. I had little or no experience but agreed to go over the drama and see what could be done with it for actual stage representation. It would lend itself to opera, but the final castastrophe is too horrid to be represented as it is too raw, I think, even for poetic treatment under the canons of modern taste. So I told him the last act would have to be entirely re-written with the nature of the tragedy softened. "Very well," he said, "we will do it."

Now the faculty of the poet is Imagination comprehensive. It consists in equal parts of fancy and invention and the more a poet has of both factors of his faculty the greater he is. I thought Cawein was weak in invention, though he rioted in fancy. So I tested him out by asking what he proposed in order to bring the story to a more beautiful but still strong close. He took it under consideration but did not make a suggestion. He was helpless to get away from the historical fact that would have horrified an audience with cannibalism, though it was easy to substitute a poetic ending. But it came out in the course of the consideration that he was perfectly willing to re-write his drama, sacrifice to stage exigencies, and conform to every practical requirement, even to surrendering words dear to his poetic soul in order to introduce others more "singable." He had no more foolish egotism than Shakespeare, who consented to have his fine passages slaughtered and his comedy "gagged" by his own comedians.

It turned out, however, that the composer could not "compose" and so nothing came of it. But for several weeks Cawein had high hopes.

If Cawein had any religious belief expressible in any other way than in wonder and reverence for all in nature that unrolled before him in life, I never discovered it. He admired the poetry of religion, its symbolism, the beauty of its ritual and ceremonials and associations, just as he did the poetry in everything else, but the dogmatic facts did not appeal to him at all. It has been said that he believed in spiritism and communication with the dead, but I am sure he did not. One hot summer evening in 1914 we went to take dinner with Otto A.

Rothert at the great hospitable home on East Gray Street. After dinner, with the sun just set and a comfortable "cool" creeping up from the ground, we took our chairs out on the south portico looking out over the greenswarded shrub garden in the rear, lighted up cigars and talked of the spiritistic and occult. It went so far that Mr. Rothert's niece, a charming girl of sixteen, who had presided at the meal, soon announced that it was "too spooky" for her and fled from the listening to the lights in the house.

All the results of very wide reading, of some personal investigation and experience, were thrown into the conversation and all three of us agreed that there was someting in coincidence and a great mass of apparently undeniable fact in all the occult claims for which we had no explanation, but which brought no conviction to us. I remember quite well the agreement upon the illustration that these things ought not to be to the untrained adult intelligence any more conclusive proof of the supernatural than the impossible feats of the sleight-of-hand performers were to the untrained senses of a child. That would certainly seem proof that Cawein was no convinced believer in life after death in its sense of spiritual identity. He seemed to me rather to cherish the idea as sublime poetry representing the dreams and yearnings of men. And he clung to it as he would to any poetic vision of his own. He beleived in it as he did in ghosts and fairies, as fancies not as facts. He was ardent in the conversation, and if he were concealing his belief it was the only time in our long acquaintance that he ever failed in perfect frankness and sincerity. After his death Mr. Rothert and I recalled the incident and its significance. Cawein used all the traditions, symbols, similes and folk lore of all beliefs that lured the faith of people, to light up his poetry. He wrote creepily of ghosts but himself laughed at them. In his poetry he was illumining human nature by its own high lights.

Probably no poet ever looked less one than Cawein. He was not insignificant looking, because his appearance was saved by two features of strength. One, the large hazel eyes, calm and kindly in repose, which lighted up with every expression in conversation. They were wonderful eyes in which potential fires burned deep. The other was the protuberance of the skull over the eyes which the phrenologists say indicates the powers of perception. They battlemented his forehead and his beetling eyebrows united to give his face at times a heavy troubled appearance, in which there was some obstinacy, but always strength. The bronze bust of him is a very poor portrait, to my thinking.

Reminiscences

By Charles Hamilton Musgrove

Louisville, Kentucky

One sunny morning in June, 1892, a young man, slightly undersize and inclined to be a trifle sallow, climbed the steps of the George G. Fetter Printing Company, then located at 241 Fifth Street, Louisville, and made his way to the office. This portion of the none-too-pretentious job printing plant was divided into two sections by a railing about three feet in height. The enclosed portion, which looked over Fifth Street from the second floor, was the working area, while the outside space, about twenty by thirty feet, was what Mr. George Griffith Fetter, president of the company, was pleased to call the "lounging lobby of Louisville's literati." The alliteration pleased Mr. Fetter's guests, who assembled there almost daily, and, in turn, Mr. Fetter was "glad that they were glad."

Several of the "literati" were present when the newcomer strode in, mopping his brow and revealing the already-sparse suit of light brown hair which crowned his head. Mr. Fetter hailed him with a cheery smile and an extended hand, at the same time saying as for the benefit of someone who was not visibly present, yet somewhere within the sound of his voice: "Everything's all right now, Howard. 'Old Mat's here and his pockets are bulging with poems. You can call the roll, and don't overlook the new member, Old Mus, just from the green fields of Meade County, Kentucky."

Mr. Fetter's remarks were addressed to Howard Wedekemper, secretary of the printing company, who was writing at a high desk which was screened from the view of the "literati." The allusion to "Old Mat" heralded the arrival of Madison Cawein, aged twenty-seven, somewhat freckled, a bit bald and, as I have said before, a trifle sallow. "Old Mus," to whom he had referred at the close of his observations, was myself. I was, as the genial print shop proprietor put it, fresh from the verdant hills of Meade County, tall, dark, spare, mop-headed and wistful-eyed; age, not quite twenty-one; calling, country school teacher; ambition, to be a poet.

After a brief exchange of greetings among the "literati," Mr. Fetter said, addressing Cawein: "Mat, this is Old Mus—Charles Hamilton Musgrove. He thinks he's a poet because he's written a poem called 'The Lonely Loon.' I don't know whether he's a poet or not. Shober says he isn't, but William Stone Sterrett swears he is. Maybe you can find out. He looks sad enough to be a poet, but then there's Humphries who looks sad, too, and God knows he's no poet."

This was my introduction to Madison Cawein. The three people referred to by Mr. Fetter were of the "literati." Charles Ernest Shober was about to become associated with Mr. Fetter in the publication of *Fetter's Southern Magazine;* Sterrett was editor and pub-

lisher of *The Girl*, a Sunday newspaper of shrewish character, printed on pink paper and wearing on her shoulder a chip for all the world; William Humphries was "a literary man from Mississippi," and entertained hopes of getting on the editorial staff of the new magazine. I was what Sterrett called the "paid poet" of *The Girl*, because I drew a few dollars a week for writing a poem, a "sermon," a couple of gossipy paragraphs, soliciting subscriptions and advertisements, doing the collecting and issuing the papers to the newsboys on Sunday morning.

I was quite familiar with Madison Cawein's work. I had read the six books of poems which he had issued to that date, and most of his verses which had appeared in the magazines and newspapers. I had also read some glowing reviews of his books, and it was with a feeling of profound reverence that I acknowledged Mr. Fetter's bizarre introduction.

"I'll bet twenty to one," Mr. Fetter continued, "that Mat's got a poem in his pocket. He'd better have one, for the cuts are made and the printers are waiting to take a whack at it. How about it, Mat?"

Cawein said that he had the poem, that he'd spent most of the previous night in getting it into shape, and admitted that he thought quite well of it in the polished state. It was "The Moonshiner," a lyric describing a tragedy of the Cumberland mountains.

"Old Mus has just turned in one called 'The Cannibals,'" continued Mr. Fetter, "It's a sonnet about some fellows that got cast away at sea on a raft and ate one another up—that is, down to the last man, and he jumped overboard. Mus has beat Mat on horrors, but he hasn't written as good a poem." Both contributions appeared in *Fetter's Southern Magazine*. ["The Moonshiner," illustrated by Frederick W. Cawein, appeared in Volume 1, Number 1, August, 1892, and "The Cannibals" in November, 1892. Mr. Musgrove's poem in the first issue is "To A Skull."]

Cawein and I fell to talking about books and poets, and of what we thought of Robert Burns Wilson, John Fox, Jr., James Lane Allen and other Kentuckians whose literary stars then were climbing toward the zenith. I was exuberant in my praise of Cawein's last book, *Moods and Memories*, and told him very impulsively that he was certain to become a great poet. He smilingly thanked me, and asked me to recite some of my poems, which I did; and he pronounced them promising, whereupon I was thrown into a fervor of ecstasy.

Beginning with that June day in 1892 our friendship ripened through almost daily intercourse. We met in Fetter's "lounging lobby," and I would steal an hour or so from my many duties on *The Girl* to walk around with him to his first publishers, John P. Morton & Company. In those days he called there daily for his mail, and was as regular of schedule as an express train. Every morning, practically on the stroke of eleven o'clock, he appeared before the

little window in the wire screen which fenced in the office force and voiced his cheery greetings. Reviews of *Moods and Memories* were coming in, and some were not very kind. A few critics for certain newspapers seemed to resent the frequency with which Cawein issued volumes from the press, and began making unfavorable comparisons between his earlier and later work. But Cawein never grew ruffled, or, if he did, he did not show it. Whether praised or berated, he smiled serenely and went on his way.

The poet's habit of work was also bound to an inflexible schedule. The Caweins then breakfasted early—possibly, if my memory serves me right, as early as seven o'clock. Immediately after breakfast Madison would retire to his study, which was located on the second floor of the family residence at Nineteenth and Market streets, and, after giving strict orders that he was not to be disturbed, he began the routine work of his brief day. I say brief, because whatever Cawein may have set down in his note books or evolved from his imagination, or learned from contact with men and women, his actual hours of labor at his desk with pen, ink and ruled foolscap paper, were just about three a day. When the clock in his study told the hour of ten, he put away his writing material and started on his daily walk up town. I used to wonder how he turned off the tap of inspiration and found the stream still ready to flow when he sought it on the following day. I remember that I remarked once that he must hold the muses in some sort of mysterious leash, but he only gave me a smile for an answer.

When he left his study a few minutes past ten o'clock, he walked up Market Street to Fifth Street, stopped at the office of *Fetter's Southern Magazine* while this short lived publication was in existence, and then, as already said, went to the office of John P. Morton & Company. The distance was fourteen blocks, and he made it on foot each way, except Sunday, every day of the year. He said that it was beneficial to his health, and doubtless it was, as the remainder of the day was spent quietly in reading.

One thing to which the poet seldom referred was his employment, in his early manhood, in the Newmarket pool room. His brother, John D. Cawein, was the cashier and also one of the managers of this betting establishment, and it was there that Madison found the first and only employment he ever knew outside of his literary labors. Madison was assistant cashier and also had charge of what was known in the parlance of horsemen in those days as the "combination book." This work required a wide and accurate knowledge of the records of race horses, their breeding, past performances, achievements on the tracks of various sorts, carrying powers, and other details of the racing game which was necessary to the forming of an estimate of a race horse's possible chances against certain other contenders, equally analysed, sifted and charted. In this position Cawein spent about

six years of his life, and when, in 1892, he quit the place, he had put by enough salary to render him more or less independent. One year later, however, when a financial panic swept the country and closed five banks in Louisville, he suddenly found his savings in the vaults of a bank which had suspended payment. He accepted the situation like a true philosopher and uttered no complaint. It was only a few years before his death that he had the satisfaction of withdrawing the last dollar that was tied up by the panic of 1893.

Within a little more than a year after its debut, *Fetter's Southern Magazine* gave up the ghost. [The last number of *Fetter's Southern Magazine* appeared in October, 1893. *Fetter's* was succeeded by *The Southern Magazine* which ran from November, 1893, to March, 1895. Mr. Cawein and Mr. Musgrove contributed to both magazines.] It had made a gallant struggle against heavy odds, and in passing it gave a dignified wave of the hand to conditions which, so far, have made a magazine of the South an impossibility. With it went many hopes and not a few dollars, to say nothing of the "lounging lobby of Louisville's literati." Sterrett's Sunday paper, *The Girl*, preceded the magazine in retiring from the field of activity, and my office of "paid poet" became vacant. Charles Ernest Shober and William Humphries vanished and were heard of no more. Mr. Fetter swept away the debris and worked harder than ever. He forgot his ambition to be a magazine publisher and, under the changed conditions, the "literati" sought a new rendezvous.

It happened that about this time Brent Altsheler, a brother of the late novelist, Joseph Altsheler, then on the staff of *The New York World*, began the publication of a newspaper called *The Sunday Star*. Mr. Altsheler and Mr. Cawein were close friends. I had a small position on *The Sunday Star* and the poet made almost daily excursions to the office of this paper. The business manager of the publication was an energetic young man named Benjamin Lippold, and he and Cawein became good friends.

In 1896 Lippold left the employment of Mr. Altsheler and began the publication of *Lippold's Illustrated News*. In that year I enrolled as a student in the law department of the University of Louisville, and, as I had some time on my hands which hung more or less heavily, I undertook to help out Mr. Lippold in the editorial conduct of his weekly. The office of this publication became the meeting place of a dozen or more congenial spirits, and here, too, came Cawein to mingle with the nondescript crowd and to get a whiff of Bohemian atmosphere as it existed in Louisville at that period.

While on the staff of *The Sunday Star* I had conducted a department called "Echoes from Bohemia," and to this column Cawein was a frequent contributor. When I went with *Lippold's Illustrated News*, I continued my department under the same head, and Cawein also gave freely of the products of his muse.

One incident of this period is worth recording. It was a cold bleak December day—a day which seemed eminently fit to furnish the last expiring rigor to Lippold's paper which then was bled white—when the poet, a half dozen frequenters of the office, and myself set about to organize the Bohemian Club. The choice of Master of Ceremonies fell upon Walter Matthews, a rich tobacco man and an old friend of Madison who, at an earlier period of his life, had had ambitions to become a Shakespearian actor. Matthews averred that the proper inspiration necessary to the organization of the club could not be conjured up without the stimulus of champagne. The office of the paper was on the second floor above a saloon and it needed but a few bank notes and a nimble negro waiter to supply the sparkling beverage. Other orders followed during the organization, and huge trays of edibles from a neighboring restaurant came in as side issues. Matthews paid the bills, and, in turn, was elected president of the club. Cawein was chosen "poet laureate," and made a speech. Lippold, not being apprised of the contemplated formation of the club—it was impromptu, in fact—was not present. There was not a lump of coal in the room, and while the club members were drinking champagne and eating rich viands, the fire went out! The incongruity of the situation appealed so strongly to Matthews' sense of humor that he bought five more quarts of wine, and very sternly rebuked a member who proposed to purchase a bucket of coal from a passing wagon. The meeting adjourned in the twilight. The grate was stone cold, but the room was littered with champagne bottles, lobster shells and "butts" of expensive cigars. Cawein wrote an elaborate poem on the occasion, and read it at the next meeting. It was full of the spirit and the atmosphere of the occasion, and a copy of it was long preserved by each member of the Bohemian Club.

Incidentally (this was known to very few members of the organization) Cawein, on the day following the birth of the club, timidly approached Lippold and offered to buy a load of coal for the sanctum. Lippold waved him aside, saying that several coal dealers were advertising in his paper and that he would make them "come across" with some fuel. He added that he was in no sense an object of charity, which, of course, was quite true.

In those days I had the pleasure of making frequent excursions with Cawein into the picturesque woods and hills which lie north of New Albany, Indiana. The poet had spent a part of his boyhood in this romantic environment, and its spell was forever upon him. Some of his most beautiful poems were born of the recollections of Silver Hills and other parts of the Knobs and he often said to me that no landscapes which he had ever seen appealed to him so strongly as did these. It was from these environs that he drew much of the magic lore which made his verse so poignantly in sympathy with nature's every mood, and his fancy so pregnant with the color and

fragrance that found lasting incarnation in the wondrous imagery which graces his pages. He knew all the wild flowers by name, and every bird note was a comrade's call. Sky and earth were his picture books and all the varied activities of nature, from the thunderstorm to the birth of a dewdrop, were notes of a marvelous symphony to which his soul was perfectly attuned.

Then, as during the years that followed, modesty was Cawein's dominant characteristic, moderation his habit of life. He was not a moralist, but his morals were good. He seldom drank, except on occasions where a libation was a rigid part of the program. True to his Teutonic ancestry, he preferred beer to all other beverages. Now and then he smoked a cigar, but he was in no sense an addict to the weed. He never talked of himself or his work except to his most intimate friends. Strangers might converse with him for hours and never know that they were talking to a poet.

In striking contrast to this trait of the poet was the swagger and bluster of his friend, Joaquin Miller, "The Poet of the Sierras," whom I met in 1897 when he visited Louisville. Cawein gave an informal luncheon to Miller and myself at a cafe where privacy was the chief feature. The western poet, clad in cowboy garb, created a mild flurry when he entered the dining room, closely followed by Jenkins, his obsequious secretary. A bit later he raised a genuine hubbub when he discovered that he could not be served with California wine, and swore roundly, to the amazement of the other diners. Jenkins was dispatched to a neighboring barroom for a bottle of California wine, and, although he returned promptly with the designated brand, he was berated so scathingly that Cawein was forced to remonstrate in his behalf.

Later in the afternoon Cawein and I accompanied Miller to the depot where he was to take a train for Cincinnati. The author of "The Danites" and "Columbus," stopped to look into a cigar case. He saw a brand with which he was familiar.

"Give me a dozen of those cigars," he said to the girl in charge. He indicated the box by tapping on the glass case with his cane. The young woman had made a hasty appraisal of him, and had set him down as a Kentucky mountaineer—probably a feudist, for he looked the part.

"Sir," she said timidly, but with an apologetic smile, "those cigars are a dollar apiece."

"I don't care a rap what they are," blustered the poet. "Can't you do as you are told?"

And with that Miller laid a one-hundred-dollar bill on the counter and walked away with instructions to Jenkins to bring him the cigars and the change. Cawein said after the incident that he admired Miller's poetry much more than his manners.

Reminiscences

This fragmentary and incoherent recital is by no means a comprehensive review of the personal side of Madison Cawein as I knew him for nearly a quarter of a century. I have touched upon only a few of the "high lights" of our early acquaintance. Silver shadows and serene silence must suffice for the rest. I might extol his devotion to his family, his loyalty to his friends, his sacrifices at the shrine of art. I might laud his courage in the face of adverse criticism, and tell you how more than once he declared to me that he "was not of the John Keats fiber" to be "snuffed out by an article." I might recite the grim struggle of the last years preceding his death when fortune forsook him. These and other episodes; these and other traits of character might be enumerated ad infinitum; but I prefer to close these desultory remarks with what I have herewith set down—keeping a few treasured remembrances folded close to my heart of hearts—and to say in the language of the universal poet, "The rest is silence."

By Anna Blanche McGill

Louisville, Kentucky

In a setting highly appropriate for a first glimpse of a poet, and especially the subject of these reminiscences, my acquaintance with Madison Cawein began. It was a summer evening—late May or early June, 1893—of bright stars, mild fragrant air charged with poetry, a Cawein evening.

Equally did the human element contribute to the glamour of the occasion, a festal one in honor of debutantes—Kentucky girls in white organdies and other ethereal frocks, with bouquets of American Beauties, La France and Jacqueminot roses—a scene to please the prosaic as well as a poet. The men were brilliant lawyers, doctors, beaux of various attractions. Among those who had been mentioned before the festivities was Madison Cawein, commended as a poet of some reputation, already a proved favorite of the Lyric Muse.

Still vivid is his appearance as he was brought up to be presented —a slender figure of medium height, quiet and unaffected in manner. His demeanor toward the gentler sex was always marked by a courtesy, a deference free from the airs and graces of the professional gallant, but sincerer and more acceptable. Well defined but not attractive according to aesthetic standards, his features had a strength and a largeness, notable also in the bone structure of his spare neat figure. His eyes were deep-set under heavy brows, changing from gray to blue, with sometimes a tinge of olive. As his talent and nature developed,

his eyes became more attractive. Less open, less a-light, though always quickly perceptive, they grew more meditative—the eyes of a gentle dreamer preoccupied with his visions, his intimations of Ideal Beauty and the art which might shape these in enduring poetry. As is often noted in men of exceptional gifts—men of "power," as the phrase goes—his nose was large, as were also his ears. His hands offered a particularly interesting study; cast in a firm mould, stronger hands than his slight body might have suggested, their modelling and expression were typical of the man. They had a transparency that gave an idea of their structure in the fingers, backs and palms. The sapphire in the ring worn on the third finger of his left hand, emphasized this transparency, harmonized with it and with the veining. Though he could pick a bluet, a frail hepatica, handle a jewel or some exquisitely tooled book with the cleanliness and gentleness of touch that betoken delicacy and sensitiveness, there was no hint of the neurotic or the effeminate so often evident in hands of aesthetes. His was a man's hand, an artist's hand, the hand of a shaper, steady and deft in movement, vigorous in a friendly clasp. Unmistakable was his ring at the door-bell; it sent the echoes clanging through the house.

Thus it resounded a few evenings after the occasion of our first acquaintance. In a simple but formal manner he had asked permission to call. In that earlier epoch the gentleman asked such permission, "hoped he might have the pleasure" or "do himself the honor" of calling. Somehow the phrase did not in the least make one feel like an eighteenth century heroine or a forbidding austere damsel. There was about Madison Cawein a certain dignity which was in keeping with a touch of formality. For his hostess, the sense of his dignity was heightened by the fact of his riper literary knowledge and his seniority in years. His age, then twenty-eight, seemed impressively mature.

The pleasure of the occasion was increased by his presenting me with a copy of *Days and Dreams*, from which he read a number of lines. Among these was the stanza from "One Day and Another" beginning: "O cities built by music!" His voice moved onward with increasingly eloquent intonation:

> Did I but own
> One harp chord of one broken barbiton.

What a barbiton was I had not the faintest conception; but the word evoked an atmosphere of poetry, a suggestion of unfamiliar beauty and helped to prolong the conviction that above the dull, dusty plane of prose there was another sphere—of fancy, imagination, ideal beauty. In that other world my guest was an initiate:

Myth, Romance,
Where'er I turn, reach out bewildering arms,
Compelling me to follow. Day and night
I hear their voices and behold the light
Of their divinity that still evades,
And still allures me in a thousand forms.

Because he held the magic key to that domain of dreams, he was welcome in our household where poetry, music and other arts were prime interests. He and my mother talked together of the older poets and of the stars and the flowers. From the beginning of our friendship he seemed to value her sympathy with his discouragements and her appreciation of his successes. With my sister, Josephine McGill, who was a young girl in her teens when we first made his acquaintance, there soon began and continued until his death a happy friendship. Many of his poems appealed to her because of their lyrical qualities. She composed musical settings for "A Road Song" and "Rain and Wind;" it was her intention to do the same service for several others.

In the years immediately following her graduation she occasionally wrote a story—much to Mr. Cawein's interest. One day he told her that he was going to sign her name to a poem of his own, with confidence in its being published. The following Sunday morning a friend congratulated her on her "poem"—a translation of German verse—printed in the *Courier Journal.*

The incident was typical of the humorous vein in which Mr. Cawein then indulged among those of whose friendship and sympathy he was assured.

During the early years of our association Mr. Cawein was intensely concentrated upon the reading and writing of poetry. He led a serious, systematic, industrious life. Quiet and poised as he usually was, his aspiration kept his nerves taut; his impassioned devotion to his art signified considerable stress and strain. Yet seen through the haze of years, the time comes back as rarely idyllic and as particularly fortunate for a group of young idealists and lovers of the arts. The days revive as a series of interesting indoor occasions, alternating with outdoor excursions when the seasons—especially our enchanting Kentucky springs and autumns—permitted.

With special clearness survives the memory of my first trip to the woods with him and another companion. The scene was that rich hunting ground of his Muse—the Indiana Knobs, a chain of hills on hills rolling northward and westward. That day they wore a glory of color: "Amber and emerald, cairngorm, chrysoprase." There, where since his boyhood he had been a frequent explorer, he led us through

Ways where the brier burns; poplars drop one by one,
Leaves that seem beaten gold, each like a splash of sun. . . . .
Ways where the bittersweet, cleaving its pods of gold,
Brightens the brake with flame, torches the dingle old;
And where the dogwood too crimsons with ruby seeds;
Spicewood and buckbush bend ruddy with rosy beads.
[Quoted from "In the Beech Woods."]

Absolutely free was Madison Cawein from any pose of superior knowledge; yet no one sensitive to the mood of others could have failed to note his familiarity with, and his joy in, the wild and lovely Nature through which we wandered. To hear him name the ageratum, the aster, blazing star and "wilding clematis," was to be sure of his intimate fellowship with the flower people—the exquisite heroes and heroines, so to speak, of "Garden Gossip," "To A Wind-Flower," "The Shadow Garden," and many another poetic fancy. He never drew the birds to him by whistle or other imitative call, after the custom of many bird-lovers; yet somehow when he was present on trips to the woods, we seemed to see and hear more birds than usual—an oriole's wing would suddenly flash; cardinal, blue bird, cat-bird and hermit thrush would "trail an enchanted flute along;" perhaps, going homeward through the after-glow, we would hear "The whip-poorwill's complaining, 'whippoorwill.'"

For the sake of dedicating one path to his memory—a highly commendable idea—one trail through Iroquois Park has been named for him, but those who through many years have gone a-field with him know that many paths might be so commemorated. He loved to be in the heart of the woods. Breaking through the undergrowth, pushing aside briar and bramble, swinging down a hillside, he frequently blazed his own trail in the pursuit of beauty and the hidden Life-of-the-Woods. Such a quest in the deep forest was perhaps a keener delight to him than was a prolonged lingering upon the summit which, however, held him spell-bound. He rejoiced in the view from Scowden's Point overlooking the Bowl in Iroquois Park and from other heights whence the eye may travel to Kentucky hills and to the Knobs of Indiana. Standing one October afternoon upon a spur of these "hills of the West that guard forest and farm," hills splendid that day in gold and crimson, bronze and scarlet, he spoke of

The glimmering woods that glanced the hills between,
Like Indian faces, fierce with forest paint.

This was one of the few occasions when he quoted his own lines; but, often recalling his exhilaration over the first hepatica, a trilium, anemone, a patch of bluets or pansy violets, his companions might

feel sure that they had been present at the inspiration of a poem; a scene, a flower might be recognized later when its "lovely image in the song rose up."

One of the last and one of the most delightful excursions in his company was a drive with him, his wife and son over the tree-bordered road that encircles Iroquois Park, through Dogwood Lane and Manslick Road to the country beyond. It was early autumn; fields and hills were turning sere, but there was a sunny brightness in the air and over the landscape that charmed us all. Two memories of the day remain—the magic of the scene and the poet's tenderness to his little son. The child's questions and comments, fostered by his father's sympathetic answers, were characteristic of a poet's little boy. We passed a deserted house, distinctly the type that had so often appealed to the poet's fancy and quickened his meditations over the human destinies it had once sheltered; it recalled the lines of "Abandoned:"

> The hornets build in plaster-dropping rooms,
> And on its mossy porch the lizard lies;
> Around its chimney slow the swallow flies,
> And on its roof the locusts snow their blooms. . . . .

Considerable discussion passed between father and son over "the old wasp," the witch and similar creatures of fact or fable haunting the place—evidently already familiar to the little boy from his father's story-telling. The conversation was a commentary on the closeness of a true poet's heart, with its fancy and imagination, to the child's happy World of Make-Believe.

Nature to Madison Cawein was always a Wonder World, a world of Beauty—and more than Beauty. To walk a-field with him was to realize not only how quick were his reactions to the delicate loveliness of earth, but how profound his interest in its other aspects and phenomena—in fact in all cosmic processes. For to him even through

> the Ugliness that toils in night,
> Uncouth, obscure, that hates the glare of day,
> The things that pierce the earth and know no light,
> And hide themselves in clamminess and clay—
> The dumb, ungainly things, that make a home
> Of mud and mire they hill and honeycomb—
> Through these, perhaps, in some mysterious way
> Beauty may speak fairer than wind-blown foam.
>
> From things despised—even from the crawfish there,
> Hollowing its house of ooze—a wet vague sound
> Of sleepy slime; or from the mole, whose lair,
> Blind-tunnelled, corridors the earth around,

Beauty may draw her truths, as draws its wings
The butterfly from the dull worm that clings
Cocoon and chrysalis; and from the ground
Address the soul through even senseless things.
[Quoted from "In Solitary Places."]

Though Madison Cawein seemed in his particular domain when among the fields and hills, nonetheless was he the interesting poet and man of letters within doors. Occasions of special pleasure were those winter evenings when he brought some book to read to us, preferably a ghost story; or when he arrived with a bulky manuscript of his own verse which we were to hear for the first time. His voice had none of the musical qualities—mellowness, flexibility, beauty of tone or cadence—that make a pleasing reader; some disliked to hear him read. For my part, his reading of his own lines was more satisfactory than any one else's presentation. He carried his rhythms as he wished them to move; his voice rose to crescendo at climaxes; he left with one the *poem itself*, not a mere agreeable recitation. Without conceit over his work or his rendition of it, his mood heightened as he read; his intonation grew more vibrant; the rhythms, if not the words, often rang to the floor above—as other members of the family would report the next morning. Never to be forgotten was his reading of "The Anthem of Dawn," whose beginning he gave with a fine swinging rhythm: "Then up the orient heights to the zenith that balanced the crescent." By the time he arrived at the final lines, his voice was reverberating through the two parlors, the hall and up the stairway.

His appreciation of other poets was expressed in brief comments and occasional brief quotation—from Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley. Swinburne's great chorus from "Atalanta in Calydon," "When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces," was a favorite with him, as was Poe's "To Helen in Heaven." With most sympathetic spirit on autumnal nights he would begin Barry Pain's lines which, no doubt, he would like to have written: "I wanted the sweep of the wild wet weather, The wind's long lash and the rain's free fall."

In the sketch of an author it may seem unnecessary to stress the part played by books; yet in Mr. Cawein's case such mention is in order because of the significant influence which they exerted upon his art. Browning said Italy had been his university; Cawein might have made the same claim for books. Lacking the refreshment of travel and wide association with intellectual men and women, he found in literature the inspiration others found elsewhere. He had little desire, time or strength for the distractions that draw others from the library—the distractions of affairs, society, varied interests; he preferred to have a few good friends, leisure for the woods and for reading. It was interesting to note the fructifying influence of books upon his

lines, in a phrase or cadence. In his early work his plastic response to other writers resulted in a certain imitativeness; later, when he had found himself, fainter grew the echos of what he had been reading—his distinctiveness had become strong enough to impress its own character upon his work.

As Lowell declared that he was always reading Dante, Madison Cawein might have said that he was always reading Shakespeare. He was constantly returning to Spenser, Keats, Wordsworth, Horace and the German poets; and scarcely less often to the Elizabethan lyricists, Tennyson, Browning and Shelley. He delighted in George Meredith's "Woods of Westermain" and "Love in the Valley." Among his own countrymen of an earlier generation he especially prized Poe, Emerson, Aldrich. He cared a great deal for the Southern poets—Timrod, Hayne, Lanier, Walter Malone. It seemed to me that their poetry charmed him partly because of its intrinsic merits, partly because it came from that South to which he was always loyal. Through his reading and many friendships he kept in touch with contemporary poets. In a glow he came one afternoon to bring news of Stephen Phillips' "Christ in Hades and Marpessa;" and again in similar mood to praise "The Land of Heart's Desire" and other poems by William Butler Yeats. With pleasure tempered by discrimination he valued the poetry of William Watson, John Davidson, Arthur Symons, Lawrence Housman, Arthur Christopher Benson. He was gratified over the appointment of Robert Bridges to the laureateship; the fact that Bridges upheld the traditions of beauty compensated for whatever may have been missed in his work. With special fervor Mr. Cawein used to recite the laureate's lines, so expressive of his own creed:

> "I love all lovely things,
> I praise and adore them."

Ties of appreciation and friendship united him in many a happy fellowship of song to his contemporary American poets—James Whitcomb Riley, Bliss Carman, Robert Burns Wilson, Richard Watson Gilder, Edmund Clarence Stedman, William Vaughn Moody, Edward Arlington Robinson, Henry Van Dyke, Ridgely Torrence, Robert E. Lee Gibson, Louise Imogen Guiney, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Margaret Steele Anderson, Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Sara Teasdale. He delighted in the art and the successes of his young fellow-citizens, Hortense Flexner and David Morton.

In his reading, as in the general course of his life, he was like an Aladdin zealous for the one Wonderful Lamp, therefore content to disregard other treasures in his search for the chief object of his quest. Hence his reading was intensive rather than discursive. He read few essays save those dealing with the outdoor world or literary

subjects. He enjoyed Richard Jeffries, Thoreau, Burroughs, and esteemed the criticism that dealt justly with poets. In history he read Macaulay, Gibbon, Prescott, the other literary historians and those illuminating the various periods that held his interest. He relished a good novel; in highly sympathetic mood he one day brought me a copy of *The Delicious Vice of Novel Reading*, by Young E. Allison. Imaginative and romantic elements made a novel more to his liking, hence his fondness for Cervantes, Scott, Stevenson, Meredith, Hardy, Turgenev, Kipling. With special gusto he used to read to us harrowing ghost stories and tales of mystery. Never forgotten is the mood of terror he one night conjured by reading Kipling's "The Mark of the Beast" to a companion and myself, leaving us afraid to go upstairs after his departure. We finally carried the carving knife up with us to sustain our courage and to ward off burglars, ghosts—what not!

In his story-telling vein, as in others, he was at his best tete-a-tete or in a small group where he was assured of sympathy and friendship. In a large company and in general conversation he did not shine brilliantly; but when he did have something to say, the vigor and the occasional naivete of his expression always gained attention. The fact is, his preoccupation with his own art was so intense that he was not keenly interested in commonplace topics and the personalities which inspire small talk and talk for mere talk's sake.

To the larger questions of the day he was not indifferent; but for politics, in their ephemeral, less amiable aspects, he cared nothing. Though he bore no active part in civic affairs, his state and country inspired his deep devotion. During the Spanish American War he wrote his resonant lines, "The Fathers of Our Fathers," and "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." Although he died before America had entered the conflict, the World War drew from his pen poems of protest and of pity: "Where The Battle Passed," "The Iron Cross," "The Iron Crags," "The Festival of the Aisne," "Portents," "The Wanderer."

His love for Kentucky pervaded nearly all of his work; he wrote delightfully of New England and the South, but his nature poems were inspired chiefly by the land of his fervent apostrophe:

> O my Kentucky, forest old,
> Where Beauty dwells, the stalwart child
> Of Love and Life, where I behold
> The dreams still glow that long beguiled
> The marble and the bronze of men,
> Whose Art made fair the world of old. . . .

The depth of his affection for his native soil had no better proof than the fact that he preferred his home to the pleasures of travel. His intelligence and imagination, of course, found the thought of other

lands beguiling—but not irresistibly beguiling. With perhaps more genuine interest than he usually evinced in absence from home, he once remarked that he would like to take his son to Oxford and sojourn there for a while. But even as he spoke, I felt that he was content to remain among the friends and scenes he knew and loved, working at his art in that serenity he desired.

On the whole Madison Cawein preserved an equable temper. With the sensitiveness of his type, he was assuredly familiar with what the English poet, Alice Meynell, terms "tides of the spirit;" he had his seasons of depression as well as his happier hours. Humor and wit were not among his distinguishing traits, yet he was quickly and cordially responsive to them in others. Genial toward his fellow devotees of the Muse, he gave hearty appreciation to those gifted in the other arts—to his friends, Miss Patty Thum, Timothy Cole, Eric Pape and other artists. Among the musicians he counted many friends, including Miss Mildred J. Hill and my sister, Josephine McGill. Wherever he found a love of beauty, a taste for the arts, his interest was quickened and his friendship assured.

Sensuous poet as he was, his concern with the spiritual as manifested in his work and his conversation was gratifying to those who seek in the universe something other than a mere alluring pageant of form and color. His most ardent admirer cannot claim that his mood and lines were continuously spiritual, but he repeatedly gave evidence of an intense preoccupation with what he named "the clue that leads us to His presence above the starry blue." Much as one dislikes to bring into juxtaposition the words, spiritual and spiritualistic, undoubtedly the strain in Mr. Cawein's poetry which deserves the former term may be traced partly to his mother's interest in the spiritualistic. This influence was noticeable in his early work and in his conversation during the first years of our acquaintance. At that time he often brought me the papers of the *English Society for Psychic Research* and similar literature. His interest in spiritualistic matters never completely waned.

Allowing for this heritage, temperamental and intellectual, his perception of and passion for beauty may be named as factors in the development of his sense of the spiritual. The approach to perfection which he found in the loveliness of earth teased his fancy with hints of a fairer world:

> Whose inexpressible speech declares
> Th' immortal Beautiful, who shares
> This mortal riddle which is ours
> Beyond the forward-flying hours.

This creed is recurrently stated through many lines, notably in his long poem, "In Solitary Places," in "Garden and Gardener" "The Lesson," and other short poems and in his plays, "The Shadow

Garden," "The House of Fear" and "The Witch." His meditative and lyrical stanzas, characteristically entitled "Intimations of the Beautiful," reveal his most elevated thought and mood. They reaffirm his aspiration toward "the Ideal with her sun-white crown" and his confidence that

> She leads us by ascending ways
> Of Nature to her purposed ends.

Not continuously did he write and talk in this exalted vein. In moods of mental or physical depression and under the influence of the agnostic temper prevalent among some of the intellectuals of his day, a less idealistic tone marked his conversation and an occasional line. But, it may safely be asserted that his natural tendency and his speculations during those seasons when his talent was ripest and his inspiration happiest, inclined him to follow Browning's advice, "hope hard in the thing called spirit." He entertained respect for the religious affiliations of others, though he himself had none. Always gentle, he grew kinder during his last years. He bore no grudges. He neither was nor pretended to be faultless; but those who had known him long enough to have marked his intellectual and moral development felt that the years had increased his apprehensions of the finer standards in life and the conduct of life.

One evening shortly after his last visit to New York he came alone to the home of his devoted friend, Dr. Henry A. Cottell. A few weeks earlier he had gone East with the hope of finding some mode of increasing his income. We had felt that he had not really wished to leave Louisville and that he was glad to be home again, near such friends of many years as Dr. Cottell and his family, William W. Thum, Bert Finck, and his more recent friend, Otto A. Rothert, who for a year had been giving him the appreciation later to be expressed in a generous tribute, which Madison Cawein would have keenly valued.

On this particular evening following his return from New York—the last time I saw him—he was evidently ill, but he had resumed his preparations for a reading and lecture tour. He had not forsaken his Muse; a poem was found in his typewriter the morning of his apoplectic stroke. In *The Bellman* [November 14], had recently appeared "The Old Dreamer," which Dr. Cottell read aloud. The recurrent pathetic cadence, "It is close of day," flashed the prophetic thought into my mind: It might serve as the author's own valedictory. I remarked that it reminded me a little of Aldrich's "Dirge" and especially of this line: "On his tired arm slumbers young Desire." Mr. Cawein seemed pleased by the allusion. But the art of "The Old Dreamer" and its suggestion of another beautiful poem could not console us for its pathetic pertinence. The Poet was tired and worn; his whitened hair made him seem a man of sixty rather than fifty.

Yet for all his pallor, his weariness from life's fitful fever, of the last difficult years, there remained that characteristic dignity of manner, that note of quiet distinction and thoughtfulness which more and more had stamped his appearance. This note we had for remembrance and as a reconciling factor after his too early death. Such preoccupation with his dreams and his art as he had maintained signifies a certain triumph over life's ironies and disappointments. If he had lived longer, no doubt he might have snared many another golden fancy in his net of poetry. His sympathies were deepening, his own experiences were widening; therefore he might have left more lyrics of the human heart. Yet in a measure we felt that perhaps his work was done. His personality had developed from ardent youth to thoughtful manhood and had left its impress upon an art, not always flawless, yet at its best exquisite, richly beautiful and distinctive. He had gained an unique and permanent place in American poetry. He had won recognition abroad as well as at home. Because of his simplicity, gentleness, art, he had the esteem of many, the affection of a faithful group of friends. To have been thus honored and cherished, to have pursued with almost unabating fidelity the art of his choice, to have borne with reasonable patience the trials of the common lot, especially those that beset his path toward the "close of day"—this is to have fulfilled a high and, as mortal fortunes go, one is tempted to say, a happy destiny.

By Leigh Gordon Giltner

Lexington, Kentucky

It is difficult always to formulate with accuracy and precision one's impression of a personality (inevitably a variable quantity,) even a personality less complex than that of that creature of infinite mood, that pipe for Fancy's finger, the poet. For each of us, even the most material, possesses not merely the "two soul-sides" with which Browning endows us, but as many as there are human contacts and relations. As "Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye," so are we each to other merely what that other's inner vision, be it clear or clouded, can discern.

Inherent inhibitions and repressions guard the approach to the sacred Ego; bulwarks of conscious or unconscious reserve protect the "solitude of the sufficient self." "We can only grasp the wings of another's Psyche; the dust of the soul comes off upon the alien soul, like the dust of a moth's wings on the fingers; but there is no fusion; only this soul-dust, like a faint shadow on the clearness of the spirit . . ." Rare revelatory moments there may be; subtle half-

tones of understanding and appreciation; but for the elusive essence of a poet's nature there is no symbol, no formula, no exact word of description.

For one to whom this singer's poetry made instant appeal far back in those earlier days when it appeared, unheralded, in the columns of the local press (long ere the Eastern critics set upon it the seal of their approval) and to whom, through the years, it has spoken with cumulative potence, it would be difficult, in a critical estimate, to avoid indulging in superlatives or, as Ruskin phrased it, "promulgating rhapsodies for dogma." But this fragmentary sketch is offered not as a judicial appreciation of Madison Cawein, the poet, but as a memory of Madison Cawein, the friend.

Many who have here chronicled their personal reminiscences of this rare nature were privileged to know him by closer and more constant contact than I; yet of these none knew him more sympathetically and appreciatively. Of our actual face-to-face meetings there were perhaps not more than a score, all told. Yet each of these, signalized by its illuminative word, its revelatory instant, stands out clear and distinct in my memory. And, during the years since I first ventured, most inadequately, to celebrate the fragile, marvelous quality of certain of his earlier lyrics, there grew up between us, through the medium of the pen, a very rich and beautiful friendship which endured even to the end.

The impression of Cawein which I gathered from our first meeting at the home of a friend whose inspiring recognition of the faintest glimmer of the sacred spark has helped many an embryonic talent to its ultimate expression, was of a spirit of practical helpfulness and a heartening comradeship. If asked to mention off-hand the most salient characteristics of the poet, aside from his supreme gift, I fancy the majority of those who knew him most nearly would reply without hesitation: "Gentleness and generosity." He gave freely of his time, his thought, himself, without question as to the worth or unworth of the recipient of his largesse. His tenderness was infinite; his bounty unrestricted.

His attitude toward the lesser literary luminary was always the camaraderie of one craftsman for another; never the aloof patronage of the recognized and established genius who, from his altitude, looks down with condescension upon the struggler up the Heliconian slope. He was unfailingly ready to extend to the tyro a helping hand; no would-be singer was too lowly for his notice; no song too faltering or uncertain to reach his sympathetic ear; no faintest gleam of poetic vision too obscure for his discernment.

He had a large, patient charity for the potential poet whose Pegasus stumbled and whose soul soared on Icarian wings. But for the conscious, deliberate *poseur*, the careless craftsman or the nature-faker, he had scant tolerance. Himself the closest of nature

students, he knew the call of every bird, the habitat of every woodland creature, the time and season for the burgeoning of every blossom, the flowering of even the humblest "weeds by the wall;" and he resented inaccuracy in respect to even the least of these. His care and knowledge prevented many an embryo poet from perpetrating (in print) some egregious blunder. He was a thoughtful and discerning critic and he would have felt himself recreant to his art, had he failed to point out even an apparent lapse in fact or form.

Graciously and ungrudgingly he accepted the office of literary censor not only of my earliest attempts at verse, but of those of many others. I gratefully recall his spending an entire long morning snatched from his own precious work in going over phrase by phrase a small collection of my verse, carefully weighing and considering each word, pointing out here and there with trained precision a faulty line, an inaccuracy of expression, a flaw in technique—and all this (a service rendered to countless others) with an apparent interest and enthusiasm which lessened the too weighty sense of obligation.

Himself a careful craftsman, he could not pardon careless workmanship in others. He told me once that it was his usual custom, having drafted a poem, to lay it aside for a month or more; then, with a new perspective, he would study and revise it. If still not wholly satisfied, the process would be repeated. A single inept word was to him a fatal blemish upon the beauty of an otherwise flawless poem; again and again he revised his every line—hence the faultlessness of phrase which the English critics so warmly praised.

In my acquaintance with Mr. Cawein I was struck by his utter lack of personal egotism. There was no attempt at self-exploitation under any circumstances. He sometimes mentioned, gratefully, the honors and appreciation his poems brought him, but always simply, almost humbly. He seemed, in a sense, to regard himself impersonally, not as an individual but as "the chalice which held the amber wine." Absorbed in his art and all his inclusions he undeniably was; genuinely proud of such recognition as it brought him; but the egotist, never.

His judgment of his fellow-writers was of the kindest. I recall once, in discussing a singularly caustic review of the work of an author inimical to Cawein and his work, the latter said; "But that is too sweeping, too severe! The man has done good work along with the bad. This reviewer sees only his short-comings; it is not just or fair." That was characteristic. He was far more lenient to the faults of others than to his own, to which he was keenly alive and which he strove patiently to overcome. And toward his severest critics, he seldom showed rancor. He spoke of his detractors, usually, with a sort of whimsical tolerance, though occasionally a rank injustice would strike fire. The cumulative effect of world-contact and the chastening years was an infinite patience and a gentleness not untouched with pathos.

Madison Cawein

It seemed to me when I last met Mr. Cawein, more than a year before his passing, that, perhaps by reason of his failing health, he had become imbued with a sense of deadening futility; that he followed less hopefully "the vision and the gleam." Yet his fine feeling for beauty and his passion for his art persisted.

It is the history of practically all our poets that the "glory-garland" comes only after death has ended the dream; and to the genius of Madison Cawein shall yet be accorded a wider acclaim and a truer appreciation than he ever knew.

A great poet and a great soul, yet withal a simple, kindly gentleman who loved his family and was loyal to his friends. A rare genius, indeed, but none the less a being finely human, who, though he walked with the immortals, yet took thought of the lowliest of earth.

"Love shares with the soul its precious immortality;" so, among the bays which garland the memory of an incomparable poet, blooms a spray of rosemary for the gentle spirit which seems still to linger in his familiar haunts and with his faithful friends.

By Henry A. Cottell, M. D.

Louisville, Kentucky

Madison Cawein

The dogwood, maple, beech, and sassafras
Stand shivering in Winter's frost and gloom;
The sunflower, aster, gentian in their tomb
Deflowered, scentless, withered, sleep, while pass
The chill winds wailing through the dry dead grass.
The birds are hushed, and in their vine-decked room
The squirrel, bee, and woodchuck shall resume
No more their Indian summer play, Alas!
For he who loved them, and whose wizard touch
Unlocked their beauty, wields no more the hand
That linked their magic to immortal verse.
Aye me! that death should hold in cruel clutch
The soul that made this ground enchanted land;
That he immortal born should own the mortal curse.

H. A. C.

Midway of the last decade of the nineteenth century I heard that a real poet had been born in Louisville; but I had never seen him nor any of his poetry. One day, some time in 1895, while in the street, in conversation with the late distinguished Dr. Edward Rush

Palmer, I saw a plain and modest looking young man walk by. He bowed to the doctor without speaking. "Madison Cawein, the poet," said Palmer. My interest awoke at once. I looked at and after the passing stranger, but not without disappointment. His figure was awkward, his torso bent, his legs somewhat bowed, and his gait ungraceful.

Learning that he daily visited the printing house of John P. Morton and Company, and having journalistic work that called me there, I sought, in vain, to interview him at that place, his hours and mine not tallying. Through the kindness of a mutual friend, Mr. Alexander E. Macfarland, who told Cawein that I wished to make his acquaintance, he honored me with a call. Our meeting was embarrassed: the poet, whom I took for a patient, had to introduce himself. In a few minutes, however, under his mild but penetrating eye, his modest demeanor and unpretentious language, I was at home with him, and then and there was installed a friendship destined to last unbroken for twenty years.

He had heard that I intended to notice his work before the Louisville Conversation Club, and brought for my use several of his published volumes: *Blooms of the Berry*, *The Triumph of Music*, *Days and Dreams*, *Moods and Memories*, *Red Leaves and Roses*, and *Intimations of the Beautiful*. These books, in two of which are the author's pencil marks of preference for the poems submitted, I hold today as a precious legacy. He had not only marked the poems of his preference, but had scratched the titles of several that he intended to discard or reserve for future remodeling. Of those he preferred I noted, "The Red Bird," "The Creole Serenade," "Ishmael," "A Pre-existence," "A Niello," "Some Summer Days," passages from "One Day and Another," the sublime description of the ride before the night storm which is the opening of "Wild Thorn and Lily," the original rough draft of "The Rain Crow," "The Feud," the most dramatic of his poems, and that miracle of music and color, "The Whippoorwill."

Mr. Cawein's quiet temperament and unpretentious manner bespoke mental equipoise and power; but no one at first meeting would get any intimation of his poetic genius from his demeanor or conversation. His language was clear, sometimes with a witty turn, but never savored of conscious self esteem. In familiar talk with friends he often referred to authors, old and modern, classic and popular, and occasionally recited their words; but, while on request he would read from his own works he never, in conversation, quoted himself. He said he could not repeat from memory one complete poem of the hundreds he had written. He never did recite one to me; yet if anyone in repeating his poetry changed or misplaced a word, he at once detected the error and then and there corrected it. He not only could not, or would not, repeat from memory his poetry,

but did not, on one occasion, recognize it when old and cold it was brought to his notice. A most "Caweinish" poem, "The Watcher," copied by me from *Intimations of the Beautiful* [1894] for recitation, I showed him in 1914, and asked his opinion of it. He read it carefully, spoke approvingly of its merit and asked me who was its author, exhibiting amusing surprise when I told him that it was his own.

The poet was methodical in his work and habits, and punctilious to the minute in his appointments. His impatience was manifest if any party to an engagement came even a little late. His daily habit was to rise at 5 A. M., write until breakfast, 8 A. M., and attend to business until 12 o'clock. He then spent an hour at the Club [Cawein became a member of the Pendennis Club, December 5, 1906], then went to lunch, then to the fields and woods (except when season or weather forbade) and dined at 6 P. M. He then went to the theatre or home of a friend. He got his inspirations from woods and fields, entertainments and friendly intercourse by day, slept on them over night and coined them into verse in the golden morning hours.

His fidelity to truth was conspicuous. He could not tolerate dishonesty, hypocrisy or chicanery. Once your friend he was your friend forever. His solicitude for my reputation was sometimes comical. He was as gentle as a woman and his naivete was childlike in that he could not keep a secret. The centrifugality of what must not be told was too strong for his prudence, would out in spite of it, and sometimes to his own hurt or discomfiture. Cawein was prodigal in generosity. He gave presents galore to his friends and could resist no appeal from the needy. He contributed toward the support of more than one dependent relative. He not infrequently bestowed his bounty upon unworthy recipients. At times when I knew him to be in financial straits I have seen him hand out money to soliciting strangers on the street.

Cawein not infrequently appeared in public, not for any desired notoriety, for he would not be lionized, but in compliance with requests from worthy institutions and causes. On these occasions he read without pay his papers on literature or selections from his poems. He was a member of the Filson and Louisville Literary Clubs. He was active in both organizations and served a term as president of the latter. He was a ready off-hand speaker on the floor at their meetings, but as presiding officer or master of assemblies he sometimes blundered most comically. There was never malice or sarcasm in his speech; but his awkward way of introducing readers or speakers was often unintentionally uncomplimentary to them.

His patience and resignation under affliction and misfortune were saintly. With the equipoise of a stoic he bore the weight of bodily disease, domestic trials and financial reverses, without murmur or

complaint. One morning, I found him seated in the Silent Room of the Pendennis Club, and in deep dejection. He scarcely looked up as I gave him greeting. He said, "I am a ruined man. I was sold short in the market this morning, and I fear that the savings of my lifetime are gone. Can you find me something to do? I must take a position and do something besides literary work." And this from an unselfish and untiring laborer of more than a quarter of a century! He immediately retrenched in every direction, rented his beautiful house, sold some of his furniture, many of his books, and moved into smaller quarters, where, for the short term of life yet to be his, he lived without going into debt, wrote incessantly and saved a small patrimony for his widow and son. "The Old Dreamer," that musical monody of resignation in defeat, dejection, and despair, was written at this time—1913.

Cawein was fond of company. His home was always open to friends and visitors. Like his historic kinsmen, the knights and troubadours of old, he could talk of tournaments if not participate in them, grace the fair with compliment, and carve at board. His performance in this capacity was comparable only to his mastership of assemblies. The turkey was slashed and dismembered in a manner most ungraceful and distributed to the guests in hunks unsightly, if forsooth it did not land in the carver's lap or on the floor. Cawein said that alcoholic liquors made him sick and justified his prognosis by seldom taking on any occasion more than one drink. He was fond of a good cigar and smoked for comfort and good cheer when not at work.

That petite casket of gems, pictures, and *chefs d'oeuvre* of sympathetic and metaphysical musing upon man and nature, which he named *Undertones* touches me vitally and marks an eventful period in our friendship. Soon after the beginning of our acquaintance the poet read the book in manuscript to my little family. In depth of feeling, idyllic delineation, sympathy and color, this book is, I think, not surpassed by anything written by him before or since, though he always frowned when I told him so.

This reading of *Undertones* led to the informal establishment of a literary and musical coterie of which the poet was the center and inspiration, for twenty years. He, with like-minded friends, met at my house nearly every Sunday night. It was there that the writings of many authors, with interludes of music, were read and recited and various topics of literature discussed; but the life of it was the poet and his work. It was there that visitors and friends heard him read from manuscript many of his poems and essays. The fame of this gathering brought to our home many ladies and gentlemen of distinction, not only of our own town, but sometimes visitors from other American and foreign cities. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, through Cawein's kindness, honored my home with two calls. On those delight-

ful evenings the two God-gifted poets brought the muses to our fireside. The first visit took place in 1908. Cawein was in high spirits and read some of his finest sonnets and lyrics; Van Dyke read several of his shorter poems and one of Browning's; I recited "The Rain Crow," "The Feud," "End of Summer," "Uncalled" and other poems by Cawein, and the "Wings of a Dove" by Van Dyke. The poets came early "to spend fifteen minutes" with us, but did not leave until after midnight. The second visit was made a few years later and was esthetically in accord with the first.

Cawein had many friends and no enemies. He loved his friends and they loved him. His relations with Henry Van Dyke I have noted, but there remains a goodly number whose friendly intercourse with the poet enhanced his happiness. Such were James Whitcomb Riley the poet, and Jessie B. Rittenhouse, the poet and critic; and among Kentuckians, Young E. Allison, Anna Blanche McGill, Bert Finck, William Warwick Thum, Reuben Post Halleck, Lucien V. Rule, Mrs. Elvira Sydnor Miller Slaughter, Margaret Steele Anderson, Ethel Allen Murphy, Marion Forster Gilmore, Cale Young Rice, Charles Hamilton Musgrove, Anna Logan Hopper, David Morton and Otto A. Rothert.

Riley testified his admiration of the man and his verse in a felicitous poem, "A Southern Singer," written on the reception of a presentation copy of *Lyrics and Idyls* and soon thereafter published it in *Green Fields and Running Brooks*. In this poem it is easy to see the influence of Cawein's genius. In 1891 the Hoosier Poet dedicated *The Flying Islands of the Night* to Cawein.

Some men of eminence took Cawein's work adversely. Richard H. Stoddard fiercely assailed him and recommended that "pen, ink and paper be withheld from a man who did such execrable work." [*Mail and Express*, New York, March 29, 1895; "World of Letters".] An incident that enhanced Stoddard's literary nausea came out at last. The great critic had mistaken Cawein's poem "Noera," which he saw unsigned in a newspaper, for an Elizabethan lyric, and wrote to a literary friend flattering himself upon his discovery. James Lane Allen on reading *Shapes and Shadows* told Cawein that the book was a poetic failure, and advised him to quit writing verse. And this in spite of the fact that the volume contained not less than three of Cawein's most deeply conceived and characteristically original poems, to-wit: "Rain," "A Catch," and "A Song for Old Age," while the "Epilogue" is a masterpiece of difficult versification not excelled by Browning, Southey, Tennyson or Swinbourne.

The literary coterie of New York repeatedly wined him, dined him and lionized him in true Gotham style. He was once the guest of Edward Arlington Robinson in his New York retreat, and was struck with the poet's anchoritic and reclusive life. On a number of occasions he visited Harrison S. Morris in Philadelphia, Clinton

Scollard in New York, Henry Van Dyke in Princeton, Eric Pape in Massachusets, Robert E. Lee Gibson in St. Louis and James Whitcomb Riley in Indianapolis.

Cawein held his own work in no exalted esteem. He was a stranger to that conceit so common among many writers of moderate ability. He loved the masters and encouraged all talented beginners. He read every volume of worth in classic and contemporary literature. He reverenced Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton; loved Byron, Shelley and Keats; studied in the original, Goethe, Schiller, Geibel, Uhland and Lenau (turning much of their verse into rhythmic English); revelled in Bryant, Whittier, Longfellow, Emerson, Browning and Swinbourne; almost worshipped Poe, and stood in awe of Wordsworth and Tennyson. He said to me repeatedly: "Don't put Tennyson's poems along with mine in your recitals; it hurts me to hear them read together. Tennyson accentuates my poetic inferiority." This was no play for compliment; his earnestness showed that he meant and felt it.

He seldom made impromptu verse, and though ready with it on occasion, never, so far as I know, committed it, except in one instance, to writing. Presenting me with a copy of Chatterton he wrote, with apologetic protest, the following upon a fly leaf of the book:

> The volume of the saddest life in song
> Slain by the world's great wrong—
> Chatterton.
> The boy who strove, aspired and died,
> Dark sorrow's son,
> O'er whose sad, early grave, how many poets have sighed.

This was written without erasure or correction. His inspirations were not uncommon. Riding or walking with me he would now and then whisper in my ear some spontaneous rhythmic or rhymed conceit, but he did not commit it to paper, and sometimes disowned it when I repeated it to friends in his presence.

An example of his marvelous facility in composition is his prophetic poem on the inception of the Spanish-American War, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." He conceived it at breakfast, composed it during a walk of fourteen squares to business, and wrote it down before taking up the work of the day.

His "Processional," the epilogue of *Myth and Romance*, was composed at my suggestion. One autumn night we sat watching the constellations. We gazed into the celestial deep and were talking of the distance, immensity and glory of the stars. He recited those noble lines of Francis W. Bourdillon, beginning "Night has a thousand eyes." And I answered with three stanzas from Tennyson's "Palace of Arts," beginning "Hither, when all the deep unsounded skies." I said "Madison, why don't you write a poem on the stars?" He

answered, "I can't; the theme is overpowering; you do it." The next time he came he read to me his "Processional," which in point of sublimity is not excelled by any poetic flight of my ken.

Cawein was not only an omnivorous reader, but a genial and ready correspondent. He wrote rapidly and legibly in script, and in a literary style that sometimes rose into poetry. His letters to his friend, Robert E. Lee Gibson, a congenial brother poet and worshipful admirer, would make a volume of classic epistolary literature had they all been preserved. His correspondence with men of eminence was extensive. Many letters were written to him about his books, and not a few of them were read to me at their reception. They were from such men as William Dean Howells, James Whitcomb Riley, Frank Dempster Sherman, Clinton Scollard, James Lane Allen, Henry Van Dyke, Frank L. Stanton, Joel Chandler Harris, Edmund Gosse, Eric Pape, Richard Watson Gilder, Cale Young Rice, Young E. Allison, Theodore Roosevelt, Joaquin Miller, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Edward Arlington Robinson, Edwin Markham, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and many other celebrities, male and female.

I well remember Aldrich's comments upon *Weeds by the Wall*, and how he showed his appreciation of the unique songs that enrich that volume by telling Cawein that "Reed Call for April" should urge all American composers to rivalry for the honor of being the first to set it to music. No musician can read *Weeds by the Wall* and not own that Madison Cawein was the unrivaled prince of writers of song-poetry. It is true that the group of songs that characterize this volume (published in 1901) were in part inspired by incidents of his courtship with the beautiful and talented young woman who became his wife, and that her charming soprano voice found echo in the musical outpour of the poet's soul. But many songs written by him long before he met the lady, measure up well with these—for instance "Creole Serenade," "The Gipsy Maiden" and "The Tryst," but the music of "The Floridian," "Love in a Garden," "Love and a Day," "Meeting and Parting," and "Reed Call for April," in *Weeds by the Wall* is ineffable. The words sing themselves. And this from a man who had no technical knowledge of music as an art or science. That he got inspiration from the great music masters, I know, for he reverenced Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Wagner, was often at the opera and symphony, and talked sensibly and sympathetically of the effect of great music upon the soul. A man whose soul found no response in "the music of the future" could not have written a sonnet like "Light and Wind."

Cawein's highest joy, nevertheless, was in simple melody and song. His favorite composer was Mozart, whose minuet in "Don Giovanni" he never tired of listening to. The appealing melodies of Schubert, Foster, Nevin, Abt, Kuchen and their kind, delivered through the sympathetic voice of his accomplished wife, were ever a solace to his

soul. He expressed unqualified admiration for that little masterpiece, "The Shepherd Boy," which at his request I often played for him on the reed organ. The music of Cawein's poetry appeals to every ear. His poem "The Old Spring," like Tennyson's "Flow down cold rivulet to the sea," is simply and entirely a piece of music in words. And from poems like this we pass on, as in a great symphony, through movement, melody, feeling and color to such masterpieces of blended color and sound as "The Climbing Cricket." Is it any wonder that Eric Pape, J. Bernhard Alberts, Miss Patty Thum, and their brother artists hailed Cawein as the harbinger of a new evangel in the pictorial art? Of "The Climbing Cricket" the poet said "I think I got the insect into those lines correctly; and they say one can't get realism into poetry without ruining it. Here is realism, I think, and it's poetry, too."

"In the Lane" and "In Autumn" are among the musical poems about which the poet talked to me during or just after their composition. "In the Lane" was written under the chastisement of bodily disease. He was housed with dropsical limbs and failing heart, expecting early death. It was a song born of deep affliction. If he had died at that time (1902) it would have been as Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" should have been, a poet's Swan Song ineffable. Commenting on "In Autumn" he said that in writing the poem he had in mind the lines: "That strain again! It had a dying fall," etc., from "Twelfth Night." He asked me if he had attained the Shakespearian mood, and I answered, "Yes, but your fall is deeper."

Howells in his first notice of Cawein, whom he justly claimed to have discovered, said that some of his poems are probably color only, and warned the young poet of the danger of too much color in his poetry. A few years later, however, Cawein wrote his wonderful monochrome "The Red-Bird," a poem which as a piece of original and difficult art stands alone in English verse:

The Red-Bird

Red clouds and reddest flowers,
    And now two redder wings
Swim through the rosy hours;
Red wings among the flowers,
    And now the redbird sings.

God makes the red cloud's ripples
    Of flame that seem to split
In rubies and in dripples
Of rose where rills and ripples
    The singing flame that lit.

Red clouds of sundered splendor—
God stooped and spake a word,
Rich, sweet, and wild and tender—
And in the sunset splendor
The word became a bird.

He flies beneath the garnet
Of clouds that flame and float—
When Summer hears the hornet
Hum round the plum, turned garnet—
Heaven's music in his throat.

Hugh Reginald Haweis said that Wagner in one of the scenic effects of "Rhine-Gold," had given prophesy of a new art, "The Color Symphony," wherein light, through color, shall be made by harmony, rhythm and modulation to stir the emotions through the eye as does sound through the ear. Did the essay of the English critic inspire the color conceit of the American poet?

Cawein was a Latin scholar and made some excellent translations from the poets of the Golden Age; but though full of the Greek spirit, like Keats, his Greek brother, he knew nothing of the language of Hellas. Edmund Gosse said: "He brings the ancient gods to Kentucky, and it is marvelous how quickly they learn to be at home there." As evidenced by such poems as 'Myth and Romance," "Genius Loci," "Dionysia" and many more, there is pertinence in Mr. Gosse's statement; but in truth, Cawein does not make the gods so much at home in Kentucky as he makes himself at home with them in Hellas.

Cawein read scripture but little and, except for some of its poetic passages, was almost a stranger to the Bible. He never went to Sunday School. He valued the Psalms, Job and Isaiah, and knew the Mountain Sermon and the parables of the Divine Poet whose "sinless years had breathed beneath the Syrian blue." Scripture, however, not having been the chief factor in his early education, he seldom quoted and rarely drew from it characters and incidents; nevertheless he took successfully some pictures from that source, as in "Miracles."

The religious vein permeating Cawein's poems is so evident that the eminent theologian, Dr. W. W. Landrum, in a talk before the Louisville Literary Club at the Cawein Memorial Meeting in 1918, declared that a system of theology could be constructed from his works. Cawein was not religious in any credal, orthodox or even heterodox way; nor was he moral in the technical sense of the word. His religion was the instinctive worship of God in nature, and his morals were the natural outflow of a heart in sympathy with man in

nature and nature in man. Indeed it can be said that throughout his thirty-six volumes one will scarcely meet with a poem that does not substantiate this claim. In fact he was a Pantheist and sincerely believed in spirits and the spirit world. The following from "The Shadow Garden," which the poet copied on the fly leaf of *The Shadow Garden and Other Plays* presented to me, might be put forward as his metaphysical demonstration of immortality:

> Life is but a dream . . .
> A dream that's born again for new delight—
> Spring does not perish; nor the rose.—Imperishable,
> They have immortal life, retaining each
> Its own identity within the soul:
> Part of the dreams are they that they suggest:
> Symbolic thoughts through which our mother, Nature,
> Expresses her desires, and aye renews
> Her Beauty. So there's no such thing as death.

Cawein was a dramatist, as is shown by "The Man Hunt," "The Feud," "Bryan's Station," and many shorter poems. But his dramatic power is definitely put forth in four long and serious plays: "The Shadow Garden," "The House of Fear," "The Witch" and "Cabestaing." These dramas, with their abundant natural illustrations, touch every phase of human life. They represent long study and deep thought. But it may be questioned if their character delineations and dramatic situations are such as to give them permanent life upon the stage.

He had wit and sometimes wrote playfully; but he owned no facility in humorous composition. In conversation he now and then made a witty remark or comparison, but his attempts at humorous satire were heavy—for example, "The Ass" and "The Bagpipe," both of which appear in *New Poems*. The first seems pointless; the second may be funny enough to raise a smile, but not a laugh.

In conversation he now and then made a witty remark. I recall on one occasion he said to a young lady whom he surprised at work in the kitchen: "You are as busy as a fly on a salad." One summer evening, he was riding with some lady friends who were startled by a loud cry issuing from the open door of a drinking house, and when they asked its meaning, he answered "That's a high-bawl."

Cawein is called by some superficial critics and readers a "Nature Poet." And certain German critics, not seeing the German element in his fancy, romance and idyllic delineation, called him an "*Herb Dichter*"—a "Vegetable Poet." That he was a nature poet no one can deny; but so was the great classic poet Milton and the great metaphysical poet Wordsworth. But the appellation "Nature Poet" can

be no more specifically applied to Cawein, thus limiting his force to the production of pictures of nature only, than it can be to his two great congeners. He found, as did they, ever in nature themes, analogies and suggestion for imaginative, metaphysical, human and superhuman flights. His favorite poems of Milton were "Comus," "L'allegro" and "Il Penseroso" and of Wordsworth the "Ode to Immortality" "Tintern Abbey" and "The Old Leech Gatherer."

The human touch is plainly felt in every one of his nature poems, as in "There Are Fairies," "The Old Barn," "Late November," "The Winds," "Indian Summer," "The Old Spring," "Conclusion," "End of Summer," "In the Lane," and in many others. In every one we see the reflex of nature in the poet's soul; in every one he awakens spirits who through miracles of harmony and color speak to the heart of man. What a Bible lesson we have in "Miracles"! What metaphysical lessons we have in "The Oversoul" and "Light" and what elemental superhuman lessons we have in "Despair," "Too Late," "Qui Docet Discit," and "Garden Gossip"!

Cawein corrected, rewrote and polished his writings endlessly. He would never allow anyone to read his unfinished work. He generally improved the verse, but also, like other poets, he sometimes damaged it, too. For instance, "Creole Serenade" and "The Whip-poorwill," two ineffable songs in first draft, carry in their later editions scars of these correction-wounds to the serious damage of their form and figure, while "The Rain Crow," "A Niello" and many others come from crude beginnings to an evolution of perfect beauty. Cawein was a good creator, but a bad critic. However, in the character sketches of certain authors, as in his sonnets to Poe, Riley, the Brownings, and others, he shows that he had read their works with full understanding and appreciation.

Whatever may be the worth of Cawein's contributions to the poetry of the English language and American literature, the beauty of his simple, earnest, unpretentious and self-abnegative life is to us, who knew and loved him, more than all. He had the simplicity, the sympathy, the spontaneity that spell genius, but with it all none of those weaknesses, eccentricities and vices that so often disfigure men of extraordinary mental endowment. I have likened him, not inaptly, I trust, to Wordsworth and Milton, for in his sympathy with nature, his insight as to its meaning and its reflex upon the soul, he was of a piece with the former, while in his hold upon the human heart, his martyr-like sincerity, earnestness and oneness of purpose, his noble soul claims kindred with the latter.

The stroke that ended his life was shockingly sudden. On the morning of December 6th, 1914, he had done his early morning work, as was his custom, had breakfasted and was about to leave home. A fall in the bathroom, doubtless caused by vertigo, ruptured an artery in the brain and brought him to death by apoplexy. He was in

complete coma when found by his wife a few minutes after the fall. He never regained consciousness, and in spite of such assiduous care as love, friendship and science could render, lingered for seventy-two hours, and, "painlessly attained the end of pain." A post mortem showed extensive disease of the cerebral arteries and proved that, barring the blow of the fall, he could not have lived much longer.

No death, of scholar, philanthropist, patriot or poet, caused deeper grief or truer expressions of genuine mourning among all classes in Louisville. His funeral appropriately conducted at the Unitarian Church by the Rev. Maxwell Savage, the pastor, and Dean Charles Ewell Craik, of Christ Church Cathedral, attracted a crowd of appreciative mourners. The service, simple and impressive, was solemnized by the singing of several of the poet's favorite hymns, "Lead Kindly Light" and "Friend After Friend Departs," and the "Lacrymosa" of the "Requiem Mass," the playing of the Mendelssohn funeral march, the "Dead March in Saul," the reading of his own "Dreams" and "Requiem," and by appropriate remarks from the pastor.

Thus lived, thus died Kentucky's noblest and perhaps America's greatest poet. His work must stand the test of time and will doubtless be found true. His sunny spirit has gone out from the circle of day, and the solemn question where, with its awful significance, bids us pause once more ere we say farewell. Has it gone like a meteor lighting for a moment the dismal void with the scintillations of disintegration and decay? Has it gone like a comet upon a curve that admits of no return, to sail endlessly deeper and deeper into the infinite abyss? Or has it, like gentle Hesperus, but faded for a season among the many tinted clouds of evening twilight to shine anon with clearer luster in the morning sky? Let us have faith to hold it so, while we say our last farewell to the solemn music of his own sad dirge ["At Last" written in 1895]:

What shall be said to him,
Now he is dead?
Now that his eyes are dim,
Low lies his head?
What shall be said to him,
Now he is dead?

One word to whisper of
Low in his ear;
Sweet, but the one word "love"
Haply he'll hear.
One word to whisper of
Low in his ear.

Madison Cawein

What shall be given him,
Now he is dead?
Now that his eyes are dim,
Low lies his head?
What shall be given him,
Now he is dead?

Hope, that life long denied
Here to his heart,
Sweet, lay it now beside,
Never to part.
Hope, that life long denied
Here to his heart.

By Henry Van Dyke

Avalon, Princeton, New Jersey

My acquaintance with the poet Madison Cawein began with his sending me a copy of his beautiful little book *Red Leaves and Roses*. This volume was published in 1893. He sent it some time in the early nineteen hundreds; the exact date I can not recall; but the gift was unexpected and delightful, and I remember writing a letter of gratitude for the great pleasure which the book gave me in the reading, and sending him a volume of stories to acknowledge (though surely not to repay) my debt.

These verses of Cawein gave me my first impression of his poetic powers—the keenness of his eyes and ears, the swiftness and singular freedom of his fancy, the breadth of his imaginative sympathy, and his remarkable sense of music in words and rhythms.

By the evidence of this little volume he was clearly one of those whom we call "nature-poets," because they have the gift of perceiving and interpreting what Nature shows us in her rich outpouring. But he was more than that. He was a poet of human feeling—quickly responsive to the deeper as well as to the lighter impulses which move the heart of man. The lyrics in the idyl called "Wild-Thorn and Lily," and a hundred other verses of like quality, show his depth and sincerity of emotion. He was also a poet of vivid imagination. The world in which he lived, and in which he knew and named the trees and flowers and birds, was a world saturated with history and old romance and fairy lore full

Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Take, for example, the opening stanzas of that weird little poem called "Hieroglyphs."

> My dreams are older than the trees,
> Being but newer forms of change;
> Some savage dreamed mine; and 'twas these
> De Leon sought where seas were strange.
>
> My thoughts are older than the earth
> Being of beauty ages wrought;
> Old when creation gave them birth,
> When Homer sang them, Shakespeare thought.

Thus the gift of one small book made me know the man in his mind and heart, a dreamer with his eyes wide open, a weaver at the magic loom, making the ancient patterns glow and glitter with new threads gathered from the fields and woodlands of Kentucky.

Later, when I knew him in the body, through meetings in New York, and here at Avalon, and in Louisville, the first impression of his nature and character was in no wise changed. His thoughtful face, with hazel eyes set rather wide apart, dreamy and tranquil at most times, yet capable of brightening into an intense, piercing gaze as if some inward fire shown through them; his quiet manner, unassuming yet not bashful nor awkward, retiring but never repellant, full of serene enthusiasms and fine loyalties; his voice, rather low and sometimes hesitant, yet very clear and understandable, with just a touch, the slightest touch, of the alluring softness of the Kentucky accent—everything about the man seemed to fit in with his character. He was a person who saw and heard more than he said; a poet who never "dressed the part" but lived it; a man who never claimed attention but always rewarded it.

My most vivid recollections of Cawein are connected with certain visits to Louisville; one in March, 1908, when I went to that charming city to deliver a course of insufferably dull lectures before the brilliant "Woman's Club;" and two or three other visits of a more flying kind, just for the pleasure of seeing my friends.

It was a delightful society. There were men and women who had won national fame by their writings in prose and verse. Others, to whom fame had not yet come, deserved it for their wit and wisdom. But the coyness of the fickle goddess Publicity did not seem to trouble them. They were not pushing, log-rolling, wire-pulling. They simply enjoyed living and wished the stranger to share their joy. He did. Who could help being happy in such an atmosphere of hospitality. Both mind and body were feasted with fine fare. In this good company the Caweins had their own place and shone with a peculiar lustre.

Mrs. Cawein had the gifts of beauty, music, and a lovely voice—the outward signs of an inward grace even more perfect. She also

was a poet and a wit, but she kept these talents in retirement, content with her husband's fame. Madison never asserted himself, and never, I think, doubted himself. There was something touching in the homage which he paid to his friend and neighbor, James Whitcomb Riley, the widely popular "Hoosier poet." Cawein never envied him, and never imitated him. He kept on his own way, grateful and loyal to his own delicate and lovely Muse, sure that his lips had tasted and drunken deep of the waters of the authentic, ancient, unfailing Pierian spring.

I remember long walks with him through Kentucky woodlands, "where Nature has her way;" and on red roads which wound along the hillsides, giving far views over the blue landscape; and in the quiet paths of the unspoiled parks of Louisville. His eye was quick to welcome the greeting of each wildflower, his ear alert to recognize the call of redbird and mockingbird, warbler and thrush.

I remember long talks in the cozy library in St. James Court, with Gertrude and Madison, when we recalled our best-loved poems of Keats and Shelley, Tennyson and Browning, and discussed amazing, unacademic theories of poetry and life.

I remember the *noctes Ambrosianae* at the house of Dr. Cottell, when the Doctor recited Madison's strongest sonnets with convincing eloquence; and Madison, after much urging, repeated some of his latest fairy-verses; and Gertrude sang old ballads with a voice to melt the heart.

All this was poetry. And Madison lived in it. Now he is gone. And there is no one just like him left.

Do you think he cares, in that new world, where the pure in heart walk by the crystal stream under the trees whose leaves never wither—do you think he cares whether or not men praise his verses written here?

No, I do not think he cares. But I think it would be a great pity if we should forget what he did for poetry in America. There was an intimate realism in his verse that gave our own native trees and flowers a place on Parnassus. There was a deep human feeling in his heart that made romantic love a real factor in life. There was an Ariel spirit in his soul that wove the most delicate, realistic fairy-poems that America has known.

His five volumes of collected verse are too long, too various to give a clear and vivid impression of what he essentially was. For that, there should be a single volume of selected poems, showing the rare qualities of his mind and art. This would be worthy to stand beside the *Serious Poems of Thomas Hood*, that true poet whom the English mistook for a jester.

I do not think you can localize Cawein to Kentucky. But no one who reads him can fail to see that he lived and grew and loved there; and Kentucky may well be proud of him and cherish his fame as a true *American* poet.

Reminiscences

By George Lee Burton

Louisville, Kentucky

Happy the man who has learned to value his friends for what they are, rather than deprecate them for what they are not.

In thinking of Madison Cawein I seem to see a slight, rather short man, with homely face not calculated to attract attention—large nose, hazel eyes, slightly receding chin, with somewhat freckled skin glistening in places where tightly stretched over forehead and cheekbones.

If you had heard some one say, "That is Madison Cawein, but he doesn't look like a poet," you would have considered his face more critically.

You would have seen nothing to suggest the cheap conception of a languid-eyed, long-haired, pale-faced sentimentalist; but if you had looked deep enough into his eyes, you might have found there thoughtfulness and imagination, the gift of vision, of visualizing the unseen and non-existent; or you might have seen at least the steady quiet surface that indicated resourceful depths below.

He had a simple unaffected manner, with utter absence of pose, that disarmed criticism of his rather precise way of speaking, a preciseness that was almost an accent. When with him, one felt his unfailing courtesy and kindliness in manner as well as speech, yet felt them subconsciously, so unobtrusive were they. Until after reflection, his virtues seemed partly negative.

All men live upon mental and spiritual islands. Some, of restless or gregarious nature, are constantly putting off to visit other islands, enriching themselves by discoveries in human minds and souls, enriching others, getting, giving.

Cawein seemed of the other type, one to remain on his own island and accept those who chanced to come, or who came in answer to the sound of his singing. A stranger might not think him dumb, wooden; but he had little small talk: and to know him you had to go to his common interest ground, or at least ask him over to yours, rather than expect him to take the initiative on things other than his work.

I knew Madison Cawein for a great many years; and although we did not see much of each other, there was always between us a friendly interest and understanding.

For many years prior to 1900 there was in Louisville a locally famous social and literary club known as The Blue Stocking Club. It was composed of men and women who met every two weeks, except in summer, at the homes of the ladies. At the meetings one man and one girl read each a carefully prepared paper, usually on related topics or on different phases of the same subject; general

discussion of the papers, a social evening and refreshments followed. The Club took itself quite seriously, as it had a right to do, and was considered socially and mentally exclusive.

Some eight or ten years after the publication of his first volume of poems, when many annual volumes had attracted attention at home and abroad and established his fame, Madison Cawein was invited to join this club. He accepted and was a member a short time. His recognition as a poet, rather than his social gifts and graces, caused him to be invited; but he was always gentlemanly in bearing, courteous and refined. He was apparently indifferent to social distinction, at least to any striving for it.

It is not my purpose now to attempt to trace his development in his poetry, but it was interesting to me to watch for it in the new volumes. I always rejoiced to see verses carrying a more human note, a reflection of his view of the meaning of life, a note of greater sympathy with those struggling with life and its problems, mingled with songs of nature's color and beauty, and those woven with fancies of ethereal forest sprites. It was good to see the too great lusciousness of some of his early work toned down, and to see in him the thinker as well as the singer and the painter.

On one occasion in telling me of *The Shadow Garden and Other Plays* before it was published—after he had sketched for me the phantasy, "The Shadow Garden," and the second play, "The House of Fear, A Mystery"—I remarked,

"You couldn't have written that ten years ago."

"No," he replied, looking at me thoughtfully.

On December 10, 1909, there was given a reception to students in the Sunday School room and parlors of the Broadway Baptist Church, in Louisville, and it happened to fall to my lot to arrange the program. The students from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and those from the Dental and Medical Colleges, were from twenty-five or thirty States, many of them being college men. We decided to have an Authors' Reading as the chief feature of the program, and I asked Madison Cawein to read for us.

He was very nice about it, consented readily, and also readily agreed when I suggested that he let me select the poems to be read. I always felt his critical faculty was subordinate to his creative where his own work was concerned; but at any rate, I was supposed to know better the character and taste of his audience.

When I suggested "Love and a Day" for one number, he remarked,

"John Peter Grant has set that to music, the second part of each stanza."

"Why not get him to sing that?" I immediately suggested. "You read the first part of each stanza, then without announcement

look toward Mr. Grant who will stand near the piano where his accompanist will be seated, and have him sing the rest of the stanza; so with all three."

Thus it was arranged and carried out, Mr. Grant graciously consenting. The effect was fine, and greatly appreciated by the audience.

The slightly matter-of-fact voice of the reader as he gave the lines:

> In girandoles of gladioles
> The day had kindled flame;
> And Heaven a door of gold and pearl
> Unclosed when Morning—like a girl,
> A red rose twisted in a curl—
> Down sapphire stairways came,

was contrasted sharply with the rich singing tones and the sustaining accompaniment as the soloist gave the next:

> Said I to Love: "What must I do?
> What shall I do? What can I do?"
> Said I to Love: "What must I do?
> All on a summer's morning."
>
> Said Love to me: "Go woo, go woo."
> Said Love to me: "Go woo.
> If she be milking, follow, O!
> And in the clover hollow, O!
> While through the dew the bells clang clear,
> Just whisper it into her ear,
> All on a summer's morning."

Mr. Grant also sang effectively other songs, the music of which he had composed to words of Cawein's poems, among them being "Baby Mary" and "She Is So Much," from *The Garden of Dreams.*

"Strollers" was another poem Cawein read that evening, and there were several selections from *New Poems* which had been published in England shortly before that time—among them "Dragon-Seed," "A Prayer for Old Age," and "A Song of the Road."

He did not read especially well; there was an evenness of pitch and delivery that might have suggested the monotonous, except for the shortness of the different poems, and their varied subject matter and meter. But there were two poems in that reading which were exceptions, two from his other volume published that year, *The Giant and The Star*—being "Little Annals in Rhyme" dedicated to his then four-year-old son, Preston, whose name has since been legally changed to the Madison of his father.

These poems were "Old Man Winter" and "Little Boy Sleepy," and he read them charmingly. He seemed to forget himself in their reading, his voice unbent, if I may use the term, lost its suggestion of tight precision; and he caught the spirit of the verses as if it had caught him. He gave them as he might really have given "Old Man Winter" to his little son, or might have told to sympathetic friends in the living-room, as he came smilingly down the stairs, just how little sleepy-head boy had gone to sleep, told them picturing it again to himself, unconscious of and not striving for any effect in the telling. I like to think of Madison Cawein as he read those poems; they suggest the intimate human touch of the best of his fatherhood.

Some of the poems in the book do not seem so happy, so spontaneous, do not wholly conform to childish thought and vocabulary; but these two are especially attractive, and as he read them, he gave the emphasis of their italicized words, the emphasis you felt he had felt as he composed them, as the verses had sung themselves to him.

The whole reading was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, and was an unqualified success.

I asked him at that time to autograph for me my copy of *New Poems*, and he cheerfully did so, inscribing on the fly-leaf some lines of his own selection, a stanza from the proem of the book, "Hesperian," namely:

> The path that winds by wood and stream
> Is not the path for me to-day;
> The path I take is one of dream,
> That leads me down a twilight way.

One does not set up memory signals at the ordinary interviews he has with his friends, and in glancing back through the years only snatches of chance conversation come back to me.

I remember on one occasion Miss Mildred J. Hill, the composer, asked me to get for her a copy of a certain poem by Cawein which she wished to set to music. I did so, making the trip one afternoon to his home, a substantial brick house at the corner of Nineteenth and Market streets where he was then living with his mother. I was shown into the back parlor, well furnished in conventional walnut style, with sunny west windows; and there as we chatted, he sat at his desk and gladly copied the poem.

Perhaps it was then, perhaps on another occasion, I spoke of a wealth of color he had splashed across the page in one of his poems, the setting being a castle wall, and asked him where he had gotten it, what had suggested it.

"Why, I got that from an old vine-covered wall at Copley Square in Boston, one autumn when I was there," he said. It was

an instance that showed how a writer builds the unknown from the known, fashions an ideal out of scraps and shreds of experience.

Cawein impressed me with his familiarity with the work of the modern poets, and he had words of praise for many things they had done. I shall never think of Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven" without thinking of Cawein; it is a great poem to which he introduced me. He was enthusiastic about it, reciting parts of it, and making me feel its greatness and his appreciation of it: yet I have the impression that the dramatic feeling of the poem appealed to him rather than the sentiment of God's love, or that he regarded the great pursuing love of God as a possible thing rather than as a possible comfort.

But after all, who knows? Who knows what glimpses of beauty and greatness came to him at times, even more than he accepted and wrote. He may have missed much, but he attained much, accomplished much. Let us be grateful for all that was fine and great in his work, and all that was kindly and true in his life.

By Henry H. Koehler, M. D.

Louisville, Kentucky

My earliest recollections of Madison Cawein date back to our high school days. He was a year in advance of me, and I recall seeing him usually at recess either reading or talking with the teachers or some of his classmates. He seldom played, and in those days there was an air of aloofness about him which we younger boys felt and often resented, attributing it to pride and conceit. We were, however, badly at fault, for a few years later when I became well acquainted with him I found that I had been mistaken in my early impressions. I soon discovered in him one of the kindest and most unpretentious of men. He was always more or less diffident, and, as a result, those who saw little of him did not receive a correct impression of his real personality.

Shortly after his parents moved to Nineteenth and Market streets Cawein played a flute, and I remember hearing him sitting under the grape arbor making desperate attempts to play some of the simpler airs. The neighbors seemed relieved when he admitted his failure as a flutist. In later years when I reminded him of these efforts, he remarked with a smile that the flute always appealed to him and that its music had often served as a medium of inspiration.

Soon after finishing high school be became assistant cashier in the Newmarket pool room, a widely known betting establishment on Third Street. This gambling place, and others like its neighbor, the Turf Exchange, operated under a license and conducted what was

then a legalized business. Among their patrons were prominent and substantial men of Louisville and the South. All of the betting was on horse races. Many men are still living whose winning tickets were cashed by him during the five or six years he was employed there. He was kept very busy and I recall watching with admiration and surprise the deftness with which he handled tickets and money. I had an impression that he added his figures two columns at a time—in tens instead of units. One day in talking over former times, I asked him whether or not my recollection on that point was correct, and he answered, "Why, yes, I was obliged to add very rapidly, and discovered to my surprise that, after some practice, I could add in tens as easily as in units. I have never been interested in mathematics in any form, and I suppose this was a case of necessity being the discoverer of ability."

While connected with the Newmarket the human instinct for taking a chance was, it seems, latent within him, but developed slowly and did not find expression until after he had left the pool room and had taken up literature as a profession. The temptation to add to his income by stock gambling is explainable—and not altogether without justification—as his poetry yielded him on an average only about fifteen hundred dollars a year, a sum insufficient to support a striving poet with many expenses. Good luck, it seems, was kind to him for a long period, and for twenty years he walked arm in arm with the goddess of chance who smiled upon him in such ventures and other speculative enterprises. He had no sound judgment, however, based upon accurate knowledge of stocks and bonds, and was equally susceptible to both good and bad advice. About three years before his death fickle fortune finally deserted him, and within about a year he suffered considerable losses and was brought to the verge of bankruptcy. He later told me that one of his last deals represented a loss of about twelve thousand dollars.

During his first years at high school he was a fairly good-looking boy and seemingly in good health, but never robust. Soon thereafter he began to look older than most boys of his age. His eyes revealed the fact that he was a dreamer, and his speech and actions were like those of a much older man. Early in manhood his arterial system reached a point of degeneration that is usually delayed until middle life. At forty he looked like a man of about fifty years, and when he died, aged forty-nine, he looked at least sixty.

Mr. Cawein as boy and man was always appreciative of feminine beauty. He sought and enjoyed the company of intelligent men and women, especially those who were interested in literature, and among that class he came to have many friends.

One day in discussing the subjects of a possible hereafter and so-called spiritualism, he expressed himself as convinced that discarnate spirits return and at times control human activities by both

good and bad influences. He asserted that he frequently experienced a strange dis-association of personality by feeling the presence of another self at his side.

He was very devoted to his wife, who was the inspiration of many of his poems. She read every one he wrote, but as a rule not until after it had been finally corrected or printed.

Mrs. Cawein was a beautiful woman of charming personality and an accomplished musician. She was blessed with an unusual sense of humor of the gay Hibernian type, a quality almost entirely lacking in her husband. She was interested in society, but he was not. To please her, however, he accompanied her to many social functions. She realized, but he did not, that he worked too hard and worried too much and that an occasional relaxation in the form of society life would be beneficial to him.

Cawein was a very appreciative man. I shall tell of a suggestion I made for which he thanked me many times. He was familiar with Goethe, Schiller and Heine in the original. We were both admirers of their works and often discussed them. During one of these discussions I called his attention to Nicholaus Lenau, and a few days later gave him a copy of this German nature poet's works. Not until then had he read anything by this author. The book pleased him exceedingly and he immediately began translating some of the poems. In the course of a few years he translated over a hundred. He read many, if not all of them, to me, a few every month. Every reading was preceded and followed by a profusion of thanks to me for having called his attention to Lenau. I might add that shortly before he died he submitted the translations to some Eastern publishers, all of whom rejected the manuscript. The war in Europe had started and German works were not in demand. Mr. Rothert informs me that he has tried to locate this manuscript but has not succeeded.

I accompanied him to the country a number of times. On one occasion my brother, Dr. F. W. Koehler, who was our host, the poet, Mr. Graham Macfarlane, Stuart McKnight and I drove up into Harrod's Creek country, a region Cawein dearly loved. It was a late spring afternoon. On our return we stopped in front of a well kept garden filled with blooming hollyhocks and other flowers that go to make an old fashioned garden. It was a beautiful spot. Cawein seemed lost in rapture and, among other things, incidentally commented on the fact that an old man was sitting at a window on the other side of the garden. We felt that the poet saw far more than the actual view that lay before our eyes. I wondered at the time if in that lovely scene Mr. Cawein had not discovered inspiration for another nature poem, and was not surprised when a few months later he showed me the result of his meditations. He pictured the whole scene, the garden and the old man at the window and had inter-

preted them as none but a true poet could. The poem is entitled "Service." It was published in a magazine and shortly thereafter reprinted in his *Minions of the Moon.*

During the last year or two of his life, Judge David W. Fairleigh, Captain Nathan J. Shelton and I frequently met him at the Pendennis Club. We had many interesting chats; Cawein did very little of the talking, but was always an attentive listener. One day he stated that he had asked for an appointment as a Government representative to some foreign country and had designated Bermuda as his preference. Subsequently he informed us that he had withdrawn his application, as he feared such a position would not net him enough money to justify accepting it. On several occasions he had told us, but in a somewhat casual manner, that his finances had gone from bad to worse and that his poetry was not paying him sufficient to maintain him and that it had therefore become necessary for him to find a position by which he could add to his income. He did not explain that he was on the verge of bankruptcy. Mr. Fairleigh was then president of the Board of Trustees of the University of Louisville. He grasped the situation and conceived a plan to create a new chair in the University for Mr. Cawein. He thought that by placing a widely known literary man on the faculty, the University would not only be greatly honored, but also the poet would be securing an income he justly deserved. The available funds of the University were not sufficient for the proposed Chair, however, and the Board then decided to establish an endowed Chair of Poetry that was to pay Cawein $1,800 a year. The Trustees took up the subject at once, intending to keep it *sub rosa* until the completion of the plans, and then surprise Cawein with the offer. The endowment fund was well under way when he died, and in all probability he never heard of the Chair of Poetry intended for him as an evidence of appreciation of his literary work.

Madison Cawein had a good and kind heart, and spent his life promoting the poetry of others and unselfishly writing poems for his own and future generations. He fills a self-carved niche. His success or failure in things material is of little or no consequence. The fact that his contemporaries recognized him as one of the greatest of American poets is a step toward an enduring fame. Will Madison Cawein be forgotten? I do not think so.

APPENDIX

A. List of Cawein's Books

B. Index to Poems in Cawein's Books

C. Bibliographical References

A.

LIST OF BOOKS AND BROCHURES AND PROSE SKETCHES BY MADISON CAWEIN

First Book

Blooms of the Berry. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1887. 202 pages, 500 copies.

Second Book

The Triumph of Music and other Lyrics. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1888. 171 pages, 500 copies.

Inscribed to William Dean Howells with Friendship and Esteem.

Third Book

Accolon of Gaul, with other Poems. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1889. 164 pages, 500 copies.

With all My Heart to Lilian and Rose [sister and cousin].

Fourth Book

Lyrics and Idyls. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1890. 194 pages, 500 copies.

To James Lane Allen and Robert Burns Wilson, with Regards and Appreciation for the High Standard of Beauty, the Excellency of their Work, Prose and Poetical, has given to Southern Literature.

Fifth Book

Days and Dreams, Poems. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1891. 173 pages, 500 copies.

To James Whitcomb Riley with Admiration and Regard.

Sixth Book

Moods and Memories, Poems. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1892. 310 pages, 250 copies.

To William Dean Howells with Friendship and Esteem.

Frontispiece, by F. W. Cawein.

The poems of the present volume have been selected from the earlier books of the author, *Blooms of the Berry* and *The Triumph of Music*. Some of the verses retained have been altered or revised to a greater or less extent. To these have been added several hitherto unpublished pieces. *M. C.*

Seventh Book

Red Leaves and Roses, Poems. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893. 205 pages, 500 copies.

To My Mother.

Eight Book

Poems of Nature and Love. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893. 211 pages, 250 copies.

To Joaquin Miller.

Publisher's Note: Under the present title are included selections from two former volumes, *Accolon of Gaul*, and *Lyrics and Idyls*. Such poems only as appeared to the author's judgment worthiest of retention have been retained. In the selection of these he has endeavored to exercise a critical discrimination and, to the best of his ability, to correct or expunge the frequent obscurity, superfluity, and exaggerated expression of the earlier works. Many of the poems have been partially, several entirely, rewritten.

Ninth Book

Intimations of the Beautiful and other Poems. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894. 208 pages, 350 copies.

To the Author of *God in His World*, with Profound Admiration. [To Henry Mills Alden].

Tenth Book

The White Snake and other Poems. Translated From the German Into the Original Meters. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1895. 79 pages, portrait, 150 copies.

In translating the following poems from the German, I have retained, as closely as possible, the form, meter, and rhyme of the original. But as there are in all languages idiomatic phrases and words expressing untranslatable shades of meaning; and frequent passages, which, when brought over literally into another language, make the merest rhymed prose; I have permitted myself the liberty, in such instances, of translating the general impression made upon me by the thought, rather than its literal meaning. So far as I am aware many of the poems herewith presented are translated into English now for the first time. [Thirty-two poems translated from Geibel, Uhland, Heine, Mirza-Shaffy and Goethe.]—*M. C.*

ELEVENTH BOOK

UNDERTONES. Boston, Copeland & Day, 1896. 65 pages, 550 copies.

Inscribed to the Pathetic Memory of the Poet, Henry Timrod.

TWELFTH BOOK

THE GARDEN OF DREAMS. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1896. 123 pages, 500 copies.

To My Brothers.

THIRTEENTH BOOK

SHAPES AND SHADOWS, POEMS. New York, R. H. Russell, 1898. 77 pages, 800 copies.

To Harrison S. Morris.

FOURTEENTH BOOK

IDYLLIC MONOLOGUES, OLD AND NEW WORLD VERSES. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1898. 106 pages, 250 copies.

To My Friend, R. E. Lee Gibson.

FIFTEENTH BOOK

MYTH AND ROMANCE, A BOOK OF VERSES. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1899. 85 pages, 500 copies.

To My Friend, William Warwick Thum.

Sixteenth Book

One Day and Another, a Lyrical Eclogue. Boston, Richard G. Badger & Company, 1901. 108 pages, 500 copies.

To G. F. M. [Gertrude Foster McKelvey] This Volume is Inscribed in Memory of Many Days.

The poem herewith presented was first published some ten years ago in a volume entitled *Days and Dreams*. The original verses have been rewritten throughout and extensively added to, making it comparatively a new poem. *M. C.*

Seventeenth Book

Weeds by the Wall. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1901. 94 pages, 500 copies.

To Dr. Henry A. Cottell, whose Kind Words of Friendship and Approval have Encouraged Me when I Most Needed Encouragement.

Eighteenth Book

Kentucky Poems. With an Introduction by Edmund Gosse. London, Grant Richards, 1902. 264 pages, 500+500 copies. New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1902, 1903. 264 pages, 500 copies.

The poems included in this volume have been selected from the following volumes of the author: *Moods and Memories*, *Red Leaves and Roses*, *Poems of Nature and Love*, *Intimations of the Beautiful*, *Days and Dreams*, *Undertones*, *Idyllic Monologues*, *The Garden of Dreams*, *Shapes and Shadows*, *Myth and Romance*, and *Weeds by the Wall*. None of the longer poems has been included in this selection. *M. C.*

Nineteenth Book

A Voice on the Wind and other Poems. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1902. 73 pages, 500 copies.

Inscribed to Edmund Gosse as a Slight Token of Appreciation and Esteem.

Twentieth Book

The Vale of Tempe, Poems. New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1905. 274 pages, 600 copies.

To Gertrude [Mrs. Madison Cawein].

[A second issue appeared in 1911, containing table of contents not in the 1905 print.]

Twenty-first Book

Nature Notes and Impressions in Prose and Verse. New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1906. 311 pages, 300 copies.

To the Memory of George H. Ellwanger, True Friend and Lover and Interpreter of Nature, as a Slight Token of Esteem and Admiration.

With few if any changes the contents of this volume, both prose and verse, with the exception of the short sketch at the end and one or two of the poems, have been copied almost word for word from my note-books of many years. They are impressions, ideas, fancies, more or less fragmentary, that struck me at the moment; notes, suggestions, what you will, jotted down hurriedly—sometimes taking the form of prose, other times that of verse as the fancy moved me, while wandering in the woods at all seasons, making a record of days extending over a period of some twenty odd years. All the verses and prose-notes contained in the first part, "1883-1886," were written while hardly more than a boy, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one and while attending high school.—*Madison Cawein.*

Contents: Part I. Nature Notes and Impressions [prose and verse]: 1883–1886, 1887–1890, 1891–1900, 1901–1905. Part II. Poems [fifteen]. Part III. A Prose Sketch: Woman or—What?

Twenty-second Book

Volume I. The Poems of Madison Cawein. Lyrics and Old World Idylls.

To William Dean Howells Who was the First to Recognize and Encourage My Endeavors, this Volume is Inscribed with Affection, Admiration and Esteem.

This is the first of the Five Volumes of *The Poems of Madison Cawein.* It contains an Introduction by Edmund Gosse—a reprint of his Introduction to *Kentucky Poems.* The Five Volumes are illustrated with seventeen photogravures after paintings by Eric Pape. Each volume consists of about 485 pages. The first sets of the edition bear the imprint of The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, and the others Small, Maynard & Company, Boston. Published 1907. 250 sets. O. A. R.

Preface: This first collected edition of my poems contains all the verses I care to retain except the translations from the German, published in 1895 under the title of *The White Snake,* and some of the poems in *Nature Notes and Impressions,* published in 1906. Several of the poems which I probably would have omitted I have retained

at the solicitation of friends, who have based their argument for their retention upon the generally admitted fact that a poet seldom knows his best work. The new arrangement under new titles I found was necessary for the sake of convenience; and the poems in a manner grouped themselves in certain classes. In eliminating the old titles—some eighteen in number—I have disregarded entirely, except in the case of the first volume, the date of the appearance of each poem, placing every one, according to its subject matter, in its proper group under its corresponding title. Most of the poems, especially the earlier ones, have been revised; many of them almost entirely rewritten and, I think, improved.—*Madison Cawein.*

TWENTY-THIRD BOOK

VOLUME II. THE POEMS OF MADISON CAWEIN. New World Idylls and Poems of Love.

With Enduring Friendship, Love and Loyalty to James Whitcomb Riley.

TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK

VOLUME III. THE POEMS OF MADISON CAWEIN. Nature Poems.

To Dr. Henry A. Cottell whose Kind Words of Friendship and Approval have Encouraged Me when I Most needed Encouragement.

TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK

VOLUME IV. THE POEMS OF MADISON CAWEIN. Poems of Mystery and of Myth and Romance.

To My Mother.

TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK

VOLUME V. THE POEMS OF MADISON CAWEIN. Poems of Meditation and of Forest and Field.

To My Wife who has been the Inspiration of Many of My Poems.

TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK

AN ODE. Read August 15, 1907, at the Dedication of the Monument Erected at Gloucester, Massachusetts, in Commemoration of the Founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the Year 1623. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1908. 25 pages, 250 copies.

Contents: I. An Ode. II. On Old Cape Ann—[Seven sonnets].

Twenty-eight Book

New Poems. London, Grant Richards, 1909. 248 pages, 500 copies.

Twenty-ninth Book

The Giant and the Star, Little Annals in Rhyme. Boston, Small, Maynard & Company, 1909. 173 pages, 1,000 copies.

To My Little Son, Preston.

Thirtieth Book

The Shadow Garden and Other Plays. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910. 259 pages, 500 copies.

To Eric Pape, True Friend and Artist.

Contents: The Shadow Garden, a Phantasy. The House of Fear, a Mystery. The Witch, a Miracle. Cabestaing, a Tragedy in Three Acts.

Thirty-first Book

Poems by Madison Cawein. Selected by the Author. With a Foreword by William Dean Howells. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1911. 298 pages, 1,300 copies.

Publisher's Note [in part]: The verses composing this volume have been selected by the author almost entirely from the five-volume edition of his poems published in 1907. A number have been included from the three or four volumes which have been published since the appearance of the Collected Poems, namely, three poems from the volume entitled *Nature Notes and Impressions*, one poem from *The Giant and the Star*, Section VII and part of Section VIII of *An Ode* written in commemoration of the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, some five or six poems from *New Poems*, and three or four selections from the volume of selections entitled *Kentucky Poems*. The two poems "In Arcady" and "The Black Knight" are new and are published here for the first time.

In making the selections for the present book Mr. Cawein has endeavored to cover the entire field of his poetical labors which extends over a quarter of a century. With the exception of his dramatic work, as witnessed by one volume only, *The Shadow Garden*, a book of plays four in number, published in 1910, the selection herewith presented by us is, in our opinion, representative of the author's poetical work.

Madison Cawein

Thirty-second Book

The Poet, the Fool and the Faeries. Boston, Small, Maynard & Company, 1912. 259 pages, 1,000 copies.

To Alice Monroe Pape, Gifted and Beautiful.

Thirty-third Book

The Republic, a Little Book of Homespun Verse. Cincinnati, Stewart & Kidd Company, 1913. 98 pages, 1,000 copies.

To Dr. Henry Van Dyke, whose work both in Prose and in Poetry has done so much to sustain the High Standard of American Literature during the past quarter of a century.

Thirty-fourth Book

Minions of the Moon, a Little Book of Song and Story. Cincinnati, Stewart & Kidd Company, 1913, 131 pages, seven illustrations, 1,000 copies.

To All Children, Big and Little, who have ever Believed or still Believe in Faeries, I Dedicate this Little Book, that Attempts to set forth in Words all that such a Belief may mean to the Soul of Man.

Thirty-fifth Book

The Poet and Nature and the Morning Road. Introduction by the Author. Louisville, John P. Morton & Company, 1914. 241 pages, 1,500 copies.

To John Burroughs, Naturalist, Poet and Philosopher, with the Greatest Admiration for the Work he has done and is still doing for the True and the Beautiful.

The poems in the first part, *The Poet and Nature*, are selected from some of the previous books. * * * *The Morning Road* consists of recent poems now published in book form for the first time. * * * *—*Madison Cawein.*

Note by O. A. R.: Many of the selections in *The Poet and Nature* are reprinted without their titles. The following table, heretofore not published, gives all the titles and also the pages on which the poems occur in this book.

Chapter 1—The Babbits: The Creek Road, 3; The Covered Bridge, 5; The Old Barn, 6; The Ruined Mill, 10; Abandoned, 14; Evening on the Farm, 18; Whippoorwill Time, 21.

Chapter 2—The Poet: Enchanted Ground, 26; At the Lane's End, Part 3, 29; The Mood of the Earth, 33; The Tavern of the Bees, 36; Where the Path Leads, 39; I Sat with Woodland Dreams, 42; Owl's Roost, 46; It Was Among These Very Woods, 49; A Path to the Woods, 52; The Rain-Crow, 56; Rain, 59; The Tree Toad, 61.

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Chapter 5—The Note-Book: Poetry on pages 134-138 is from *Nature Notes and Impressions*, pages: 81, 96, 98, 173, 185 and 191. The Wood Thrush, 143; Catkins, 147; Dragonflies, 152; Broken Drouth, 155; The Climbing Cricket, 158. Prose quoted on pages 131-139 is from *Nature Notes and Impressions* pages: 67, 72, 184, 227 and 243.

Chapter 6—Homeward Bound: The Oversoul, 162.

Note by O. A. R.: The second part of this book, *The Morning Road*, contains fifty-two new poems, each with its title.

Thirty-sixth Book

The Cup of Comus; Fact and Fancy. New York, The Cameo Press, 1915. 96 pages, 500+500 copies.

Friendship Edition. Foreword by Rose de Vaux-Royer. Introductory Poems: To My Good Friend W. T. H. Howe, by Madison Cawein; Threnody in May, In Memory of Madison Cawein, by Clinton Scollard; Broken Music, In Memoriam, by Rose de Vaux-Royer; Madison Cawein, 1865-1914, by Margaret Steele Anderson.

Contents: Fifty-five poems by Madison Cawein, most of which appeared in recent magazines and periodicals.

Brochures

Let Us Do the Best that We Can. Chicago, P. F. Volland & Company, 1909. 6 pages.

So Many Ways. Chicago, P. F. Volland & Company, 1911. 6 pages.

THE MESSAGE OF THE LILIES. Chicago, P. F. Volland & Company, 1913. 8 pages.

CHRISTMAS ROSE AND LEAF. New York, The Forest Craft Guild, 1913. 4 pages.

WHATEVER THE PATH. New York, The Forest Craft Guild, 1913. 4 pages.

THE DAYS OF USED TO BE. New York, The Forest Craft Guild, 1913. 4 pages.

CARDS

Six decorated cards, each about fifty words: *The Dawn*, *Happy New Year*, and *Christmas Greeting to You*, printed by P. F. Volland & Company; *Christmas Bells*, *Christmas Letter*, and *The Christmas Hearth*, printed by John P. Morton & Company. 1911-1913.

CALENDAR FOR 1912. Four hand-colored panels; each a landscape and five lines of verse. P. F. Volland & Company.

PROSE SKETCHES

PAUL HERANCOUR'S SACRIFICE. *The Current*, Chicago, July 24, 1886.

HIS LEGACY. *Fetter's Southern Magazine*, Louisville, June, 1893.

PROSE-NOTES in *Nature Notes and Impressions*. 1906.

WOMAN OR—WHAT? *Nature Notes and Impressions*. 1906.

INTRODUCTION to *The Book of Love*, a book of prose and verse, compiled by Jessie Reid. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1911.

DIALOGUES connecting the poems in *The Poet and Nature*. 1914.

THE HOUSE OF SHADOWS. John P. Morton & Company's *Western Farmers' Almanac*, Louisville, 1915.

POETRY AND THE PUBLIC, and six other sketches. See this volume, Chapter X, pages 340-353.

All preceding items are now out of print, except the following books of which their publishers have on hand only a few copies: *Blooms of the Berry; The Triumph of Music; Accolon of Gaul; The Vale of Tempe; Nature Notes and Impressions; The Poems of Madison Cawein* (in five volumes); *Poems; The Republic; Minions of The Moon; The Poet and Nature and The Morning Road;* and *The Cup of Comus*.

B.

INDEX TO POEMS IN CAWEIN'S BOOKS

Nothing has been found among the Cawein papers to indicate that the poet kept a special record to serve as a memorandum of the titles he had used. A paragraph devoted to the number of poems published in his books appears on page 68 of this volume and is here repeated:

The thirty-six books by Madison Cawein contain about 2700 poems; about 1500 are distinct originals and about 1200 are either unchanged reprints or changed versions. His original versions comprise the greater part of twenty-five books. *The Poems of Madison Cawein*, in five large volumes, is a Compilation of his poems—in the original or in a new version—written before 1907. Six books consist chiefly of Selections he made from previous volumes. The Compilation and the various Selections cause many of his poems—some in the original, others in a changed version—to appear two or more times.

Cawein's books contain practically all the poems he published in newspapers and magazines. Poems not printed in any of his books are not cited in this index. Titles are not given in their original form if changed after having appeared in newspapers or magazines, where the poems were first published. Of the many short lyrics that occur in the long poems only those few to which titles were given are here noted; no attempt is made to cite the others by their first lines. Titles grouped under one head refer to the same poem, reprinted without a change or with few or many changes. This index includes all the titles used in the books; but in its grouping of different versions and changed titles it is complete only to the extent of my present familiarity with the poems.

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20 The Vale of Tempe. 274 pages.....1905
21 Nature Notes and Impressions. 311 pages.....1906
22 Volume I, The Poems of Madison Cawein. 493 pages..1907
23 Volume II, The Poems of Madison Cawein. 530 pages..1907
24 Volume III, The Poems of Madison Cawein. 483 pages..1907
25 Volume IV, The Poems of Madison Cawein. 439 pages..1907
26 Volume V, The Poems of Madison Cawein. 482 pages..1907
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(a) Wine-warm winds that sigh and sing,
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(b) O lyrist of the lowly and the true,
James Whitcomb Riley, **5,** first poem; **23,** first poem.
(c) Oh, shall I sing of joy I only remember as departed joy.
Proem, **7**; Epilogue, **23,** 260.
(d) How shall I greet him?
Joaquin Miller, **8,** first poem; The Poet of the Sierras, **26,** 270.
(e) From the mountain's hoarse greeting came hollow,
Musagetes,**3,** 116; Epilogue,**8**; The Daughter of Merlin, **22,** 363.
(f) They took him into confidence—each oak,
9, first poem; Proem, **26,** 287.
(g) Long are the days * * * and nights,
11, first poem; Proem to Undertones, **26,** 107.
(h) Not while I live may I forget,
12, first poem; Proem, **25**; The Garden of Dreams, **31,** 125.
(i) Not for thyself but for the sake of song,
A Last Word, **12,** 123; **24,** 249.
(j) Ah, not for us the Heavens that hold,
The Dedication, **13,** first poem; To Harrison S. Morris, **25,** 377.
(k) Beyond the moon, within a land of mist,
Epilogue, **13,** 76; **25,** 218.
(l) And one, perchance, will read and sigh,
Foreword, **14**; To R. E. Lee Gibson, **22,** 217.
(m) The old enthusiasms are dead,
Afterword, **14,** 106; **26,** 283.
(n) There is no rhyme that is half so sweet,
Proem, **15**; **25,** 225; Preludes, first part, **31,** 44.
(o) What though I dreamed of mountain heights,
A Prelude, **6,** 7; **23,** 265; **26,** 417.
(p) In the first rare spring of song * * * Fair the dandelion is.
My Suit, **2,** 94; Foreword, **17**; **24,** 253.
(q) What vague traditions do the golden eves * * * inscribe,
Afterword, **17,** 94; **24,** 483.
(r) There is a poetry that speaks,
Prologue, **18, 24**; **35,** 125; see also Substratum, **1,** 70; **6,** 42.

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(s) O Life! O Death! O God! Have I not striven?
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(t) Oh, for a soul that fulfills,
Proem, **19**; **24,** 367.
(u) You are weary of reading,
20, first poem; To Gertrude, **26,** first poem.
(v) We have worshipped two gods,
Epilogue, **20,** 273; **26,** 482.
(w) Would I could talk as the flowers talk,
21, first poem.
(x) These are the flowers I bring to thee,
To Gertrude, **22,** 83.
(y) The songs love sang to us are dead,
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(z) A thought to lift me up to * * * wildflowers,
Intimations of the Beautiful, **9,** 1; **26,** 1; Preludes, second part, **31,** 44.
(aa) The path that winds by wood and stream
Hesperian, Proem, **28**; **35,** 99.
(bb) You, who are four years old,
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(cc) When dusk falls cool as a rained-on rose,
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(dd) The leaves are fading; and on sea and shore,
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(ee) What loveliness the years contrive to rob us of!
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(ff) There is a world Life dreams of, long since lost.
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(gg) The nights of song and story,
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Articles and Comments on Cawein's Life and Works
Anthologies Containing Poems by Cawein
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The following lists cite a comparatively small portion of the matter in print pertaining to the life and the works of Madison Cawein. More than three hundred reviews and other articles appear in the Louisville papers alone. Articles here cited are confined to the ones selected from among those found in books, monthly and weekly publications, the *New York Times Review of Books*, *The Boston Evening Transcript* and the Louisville dailies. All items are arranged in chronological order; those marked *Reprinted* are reprinted in this volume, beginning on the page indicated.

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PUBLICATIONS OF THE FILSON CLUB

1884—1921

The Filson Club is an historical association of Louisville, Kentucky, organized May 15, 1884. It was named after John Filson, whose History of Kentucky was published in 1784. The purpose of the Club, as expressed in its charter, is to collect and preserve historic matter pertaining to Kentucky and the adjacent states. Thirty Publications written by members of the Club have been issued; all are limited editions; all are bound in paper cover, except No. 30, some copies of which are bound in paper, others in green cloth. These books are not for sale in the commercial sense, but copies left beyond the requirements of the Club for its members and for its exchange with other historical associations are sold at about cost price. All the Publications, except No. 29, are from the press of John P. Morton & Company, Louisville. The asterisk indicates that the Publication is out of print.

For further information write to The Secretary, The Filson Club, Louisville, Kentucky.

1. JOHN FILSON, the first historian of Kentucky. An account of his life and writings, principally from original sources. By *Reuben T. Durrett.* Illustrated. Quarto, 132 pages. 1884.

*2. THE WILDERNESS ROAD. A description of the routes of travel by which the pioneers and early settlers first came to Kentucky. By *Thomas Speed.* Illustrated with a map showing the route of travel. Quarto, 75 pages. 1886.

*3. THE PIONEER PRESS OF KENTUCKY. From the printing of the first paper west of the Alleghanies, August 11, 1787, to the establishment of The Daily Press, in 1830. By *William Henry Perrin.* Illustrated. Quarto, 93 pages. 1888.

*4. LIFE AND TIMES OF JUDGE CALEB WALLACE. Some time a Justice of the Court of Appeals of the State of Kentucky. By *William H. Whitsitt.* Quarto, 151 pages. 1888.

*5. An Historical Sketch of St. Paul's Church, Louisville, Kentucky. Prepared for the Semi-Centennial Celebration, October 6, 1889. By *Reuben T. Durrett.* Illustrated. Quarto, xv—75 pages. 1889.

*6. The Political Beginnings of Kentucky. A narrative of public events bearing on the history of that State up to the time of its admission into the American Union. By *John Mason Brown.* Illustrated with a likeness of the author. Quarto, 263 pages. 1889.

7. The Centenary of Kentucky. Proceedings at the celebration by The Filson Club, June 1, 1892, of the one hundredth anniversary of the admission of Kentucky as an Independent State into the Federal Union. Prepared for publication by *Reuben T. Durrett.* Illustrated. Quarto, 200 pages. 1892.

8. The Centenary of Louisville. A paper read before the Southern Historical Association, May 1, 1880, in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the city of Louisville as an incorporated town under an act of the Legislature of Virginia. By *Reuben T. Durrett.* Illustrated. Quarto, 200 pages. 1893.

*9. The Political Club, Danville, Kentucky, 1786-1790. Being an account of an early Kentucky debating society, from the original papers recently found. By *Thomas Speed.* Quarto, xii—167 pages. 1894.

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12. Bryant's Station. And the Memorial Proceedings held on its site under the auspices of the Lexington Chapter D. A. R., August 18, 1896, in honor of its heroic mothers and daughters. Five addresses, including The Battle of the Blue Licks, by Bennett H. Young. Prepared for publication by *Reuben T. Durrett.* Illustrated. Quarto, xii—277. 1897.

*13. First Explorations of Kentucky. Dr. Thomas Walker's Journal of an exploration of Kentucky in 1750, being the first record of a white man's visit to the interior of that territory; also Colonel Christopher Gist's Journal of a tour through Ohio and Kentucky in 1751. With notes and sketches. By *J. Stoddard Johnston.* Illustrated. Quarto, xix—222 pages. 1898.

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*17. The Old Masters of the Bluegrass. Biographical sketches of the Kentucky artists, Matthew H. Jouett, Joseph H. Bush, John Grimes, Oliver Frazer, Louis Morgan and Joel T. Hart. By *Samuel W. Price*. Preface: Life of Samuel W. Price, by Reuben T. Durrett. Illustrated. Quarto,xvii—181 pages. 1902.

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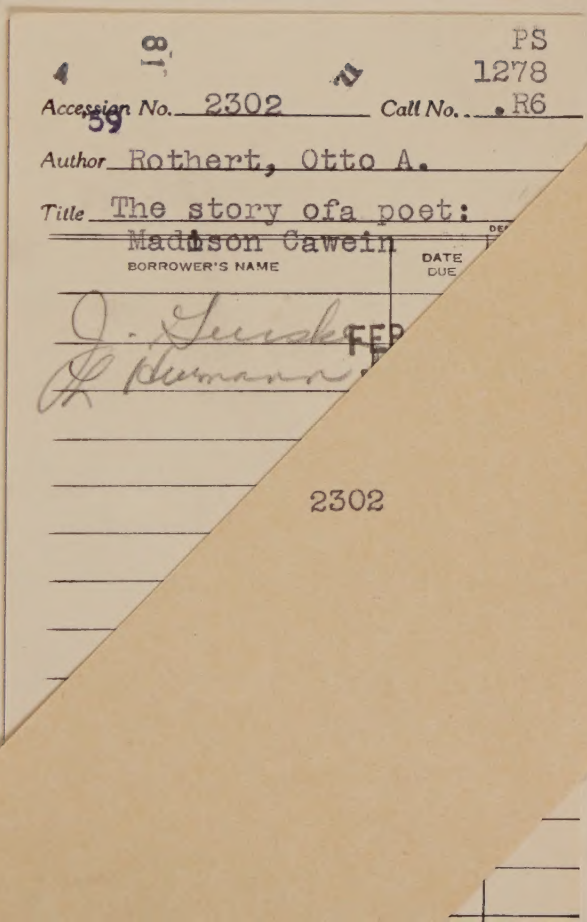
28. The Kentucky River Navigation. A history of improvements on the river and its mountain tributaries, and of the rise and decline of the Kentucky-New Orleans traffic. Also a history of the resources and industries of the mountain section of the river basin. By *Mary Verhoeff.* Illustrated. Octavo, vi—257 pages. 1917.

29. The Anti-Slavery Movement in Kentucky Prior to 1850. From the first attack upon slavery in Kentucky down to and including the State Constitutional Convention of 1849. By *Asa Earl Martin.* Octavo, 165 pages. Printed by The Standard Printing Company of Louisville. 1918.

30. The Story of a Poet: Madison Cawein. His intimate life as revealed by his letters and hitherto unpublished material, including reminiscences by his closest associates; also articles from newspapers and magazines, and a list of his poems. By *Otto A. Rothert.* In paper cover same as the Club's other Publications; also bound in green cloth. Illustrated. Octavo, xi—545 pages. 1921.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